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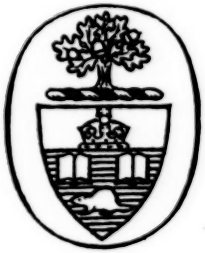

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JULY, 1955

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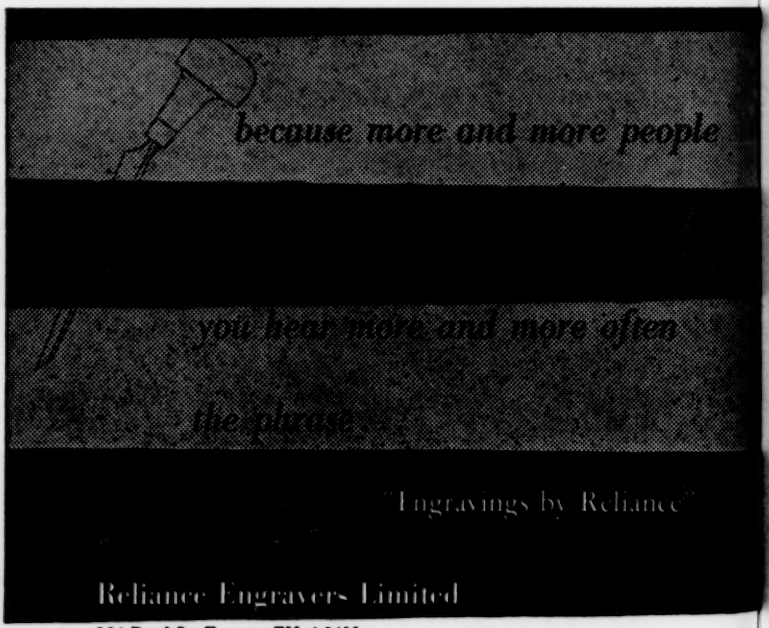
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LITERATURE AND THE LITERARY JUDGMENT

DOROTHY WALSH

The "greatness" of literature cannot be determined solely by literary standards; though we must remember that whether it is literature or not can be determined only by literary standards. T. S. ELIOT[1]

No poet, no artist of any art, has his complete meaning alone. His significance, his appreciation is the appreciation of his relation to the dead poets and artists. You cannot value him alone; you must set him for comparison and contrast among the dead. I mean this as a principle of aesthetic, not merely historical criticism. T. S. ELIOT[2]

IS there a discrepancy between these pronouncements? The first says that we must look beyond the realm of literature to arrive at an appraisal of literary greatness. The second says that to determine the significance and the appreciation of a work of literature we must compare and contrast it with other works of literature. There is, indeed, no discrepancy if we assume that the second quotation has reference to a more limited judgment than that envisioned by the first.

The belief that a work of literature is properly subject to two distinguishable judgments of appraisal, one of which evaluates it as art and the other of which evaluates it as wisdom, is so common that there must be something about the nature of literature to evoke it. But in this case, as in others, the discovery of some empirical basis for a theory does not necessarily reach to the justification of the theory. If there are phenomena that need to be "saved," there may yet be more than one path to that salvation.

Though it is unlikely that programmes of theoretical salvation are adopted for the reason that no alternative has been considered, yet it seems worth-while to attempt to restate a position, for something new, however modest, may thus emerge. This essay is not a discussion of Mr. Eliot's views. It is a general defence of the doctrine that greatness in literature is something that must be discovered within the domain of literature and judged by strictly literary standards. Otherwise expressed, what is special and peculiar about the art of literature can be accommodated by saying that literature is not just like any other art and that it is unnecessary to pass beyond this to the assertion that literature is not just art.

[1] *Essays Ancient and Modern* (New York, 1936), 92.
[2] *Selected Essays 1917–1932* (London, 1932), 4–5.

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There are two initial questions that need to be raised. How does literature differ from other forms of writing? How does literature differ from other forms of art? If it be objected that to ask both questions is to prejudge the issue—in that each suggests the answer to the other—the objection is sustained. But have we a plausible alternative? There is, after all, no use pretending that simple empirical inspection will enable us to "find" works of literature in the same sense in which we can find butterflies or oak trees. We can find linguistic compositions but if we assume, as seems sensible, that not all of these are works of literature, we must venture a classification, and however much we may endeavour to base this on observed characteristics, the act of selection of these is not carried out in a condition of theoretical innocence. What cannot be evaded had better be acknowledged. Our first question therefore becomes: Is there any way of distinguishing the artistic from the non-artistic employment of language?

All attempts to arrive at this distinction by reference to the presence or absence of isolated linguistic elements, such as figures of speech or a selective vocabulary of poetic or literary diction, are inadequate. It seems, then, that the distinction must be made in terms of totality of compositional design. It is, I think, possible to describe, in a general way, the difference between two types of pattern for linguistic composition, one of which may be said to be artistic and the other non-artistic. However, it must be acknowledged that this distinction can be brought out only by contrasting clear and manifest cases of one and the other. There will be instances of writing difficult to classify and of these it must simply be said that they are in some respects art-like and in some respects not. Perhaps the simplest way of summing up the difference is to say that a linguistic composition is artistic in so far as it is non-teleological and moves towards closure, while it is non-artistic in so far as it is teleological and moves towards conclusion.

The non-artistic ideal is the ideal of progressive development to a goal or end, which end constitutes the point of prime importance for the sake of which everything else exists. It may be roughly symbolized by a line along which one moves. In the measure that this ideal is capable of being fulfilled, what is left behind is completely left behind, used up, exploited. If its import has been fully grasped, it may as well disappear, for its purpose was to bring the reader or writer to the place where he now is. When the goal or end is reached it constitutes the prize, the fruition, the conclusion. Ideally the conclusion is detachable and can provide the starting point for a new excursion. This pattern is most nearly approximated in anything that may be called a

demonstration. Of course the road by which one arrives is of importance because, though arrival is the great thing, it will not be recognized as arrival unless it has been by the proper road. This is what persons have in mind when they say, with understandable but misleading exaggeration, that the method or the argumentation is everything. It is really the conclusion that is everything, provided its papers, so to speak, are all in order. This ideal is often enough only generally approximated, so that instead of a single line there is a network of lines, far from neat. Nevertheless, if the structure of the discourse is unmistakably teleological and moves forward, in however hesitant a fashion, to a goal, it is the non-artistic ideal that predominates.

The artistic ideal is different. It is more properly symbolized by a circle than by a line, for the purpose is not to reach a conclusion but to achieve a total presentation. Of course this does not mean that there is no character of progression, or that the order in which elements appear is unimportant, since no literary artist who knows what he is about would neglect to exploit the temporal character of his art. Nevertheless, no element can attain its full significance until everything is present. There is a sense in which the beginning is in the end and the end in the beginning. There is no detachable conclusion since what serves as "conclusion" is closure, not consequence. However much there may be more or less appropriate ways of being introduced to the various parts, and however much this order of introduction counts for the total effect, yet the total effect is what matters. Artistic structural order is unsuited to the task of demonstration and, in fact, artistic writing does not seek to demonstrate anything. Rather it seeks to make manifest by presentation and display. For this presentation the totality of the composition must be grasped in its totality, for lines of reference and relationship do not all flow in one direction. The general difference between the two types of composition is comparable to the difference in the experience of travelling along a road to a destination and the experience of exploring—though according to a controlled order of sequence—an enclosed garden.

This way of distinguishing language as it is used for the purpose of literature has at least the merit of being comprehensive enough to cover the simple fairy tale as well as the complex poem. Furthermore, it enables us to recognize that literature, as an art form, has something in common with the other arts since all artistic structures are intended to be taken as wholes and every work of art aspires to the condition of unified totality and presentational togetherness. But this, though relevant, is far from sufficient. If general pattern or design is

what makes literature art, it is the employment of the linguistic medium that makes it literature, and this medium, both in terms of what it has and what it lacks, is unlike that of any other art.

Language has reference beyond itself to the non-linguistic, and the consequence of this for the art of literature is that literature is and must be a representational art. It is, indeed, the only art that is absolutely committed, without alternative choice, in this direction. All art can be expressive, whether representational or not, but an art that is representational must achieve its expressiveness more indirectly.

Though literature, as a representational art, has something in common with painting and sculpture, in so far as these are representational, yet literature is unlike all the other arts in that the literary artist can achieve very little on the level of sensuous aesthetic surface. Language is at once astonishingly rich and extraordinarily meagre. It strikes us as rich when we consider its vast range of reference but it seems meagre when we consider what it has to offer in the way of direct sensuous presence. The visual appearance of writing has been cultivated among those who use Chinese and Arabic but this interest is not strictly literary. The auditory character of language has literary significance and is usually a matter of importance to the literary artist and particularly the poet. However, it is notorious that verbal sound divorced from verbal sense has, in fact, little of the impressiveness that we are sometimes inclined to feel it ought to have. Accordingly, the literary artist must achieve everything in the form of imaginative evocation. Literature is thus the most indirect of all the arts.

If we assume, as seems appropriate, that every art has its unique opportunities, we shall not ask: How can the disadvantages of indirection be overcome? but, rather, How can the advantages of indirection be exploited? High literary success—however much it may strike us as in some way miraculous—will not consist in the ingenious *tour de force* of verbal music or verbal painting. It is folly to expect a work of literature to deny, or evade, or "overcome" its linguistic condition; its linguistic condition is its mode of being. What, then, are the unique possibilities of an art structure articulated in the medium of language?

If language is meagre from the point of view of what it has to offer in the way of direct aesthetic presence, language is rich in range of reference. Language can evoke the sensuous, the emotional, and the intellectual with equal facility. Though it would be an error to assert that a poem, or other work of literature, is always more complex in structure than, for example, a musical composition, it is, I think, not an error to assert that even the simplest work of literature embraces a greater diversity of different sorts of things—of elements derived from

different levels or domains of experience—than could possibly be accommodated in a work of non-linguistic art. Otherwise expressed, literature lends itself to elaborations and complications of interpretation far more extensive than anything that can be—or that need be—provided in any other art. It is thus, perhaps, not a matter of misplaced intellectualism if the issue of wisdom, knowledge, or insight is insistently raised with reference to works of literature.

But it is one thing to recognize why an issue arises and another thing to decide how best to deal with it. There can hardly be any doubt that works of literature are in some way assertive and make claims, even though these claims, being customarily a function of depth-meanings, are not usually to be discovered on the level of surface statement. These claims have humanistic import. In one way or another they are claims about the nature of man, about the human condition, about the possibilities of human experience, about the appropriateness of attitudes, and the relative importance of values. So much seems evident. But if we are to take these claims seriously, and it seems that we must do so if we are to take literature seriously, how shall we avoid raising the issue of authentication, justification, validation? This brings us squarely face to face with the question: Where are we to look for the evidence or the data that would authenticate or justify or validate the kind of claims a work of literature makes? More particularly, are we to look within the confines of a work of literature or are we to look without? There are considerations that suggest that it is more appropriate to look within, and though it may prove to be the case that after we have done justice to these considerations we still have a problem, yet perhaps at that point the problem, in its residual character, may prove to be more manageable.

The considerations that suggest that we should look within a work of literature to justify the claim or claims it makes are dictated by our awareness of literature as art. If a work of literature is in any essential sense a vehicle of knowledge or insight it would seem that this insight must be such as to require artistic means for its expression and communication. Otherwise stated, we are concerned with what a work of literature itself says and not simply with what might be inferred from the fact of its existence as a cultural artifact. The interest in cultural artifacts is perfectly legitimate but this is the interest that permits us to say: *Lycidas* means that Milton must have had a classical education. Strictly speaking, of course, this is not what *Lycidas* means, it is what the fact of the existence of *Lycidas* means. But if the essential claims of a work of literature are voiced in and through and by means of the artistic structure and if it is the nature of an artistic structure to be

closed in upon itself, how shall we avoid the conclusion that claims and justification of claims are functions of a single order? This leads us to say that a work of literature both makes and seeks to justify its claims by presenting a scene, a situation, a state of affairs, a "world" in which things are of a certain kind. From this we are led to the view that coherence and vividness are what confer the only kind of authenticity a work of literature can have and that this is enough. How, in the measure that you have just lived through the vicarious experience of sensing, thinking, and feeling things in this way, can you entertain doubts about authenticity?

This line of thought is further strengthened by the consideration that the realm of literature is a realm of plural entities. The scene of every work of literature is always "another part of the island" and there is no topography of this island. There may be such a thing as common terrain and weather in the different works of a single literary artist—the sort of thing that allows us to speak of the "Jamesian world" or the "Austen world"—but even this is not always to be counted upon, and to suppose a genuine community in the realm of literature is to suppose the impossible. The Underground Man cannot join the Canterbury Pilgrims any more than a Perugino angel can hover over a Cézanne landscape.

Yet if from this we conclude that a work of literature has exactly the same degree of autonomy characteristic of a work of non-linguistic art and that, in consequence, the only relevant consideration is the consideration of vividness and coherence—in short, the power of the literary illusion to impose itself upon our imaginative sensibility—we do not reckon with the fact that the literary art work, being less impressive in its sensuous presence, is likely to be more insistent in its cognitive claims.

There is some important difference between, let us say, a pictorial garden and a poetic garden. The pictorial garden is directly present in its pictorial space. The pictorial moon shines through the pictorial trees upon the pictorial figures. To be sure we need to have had some past acquaintance with gardens, moonlight, trees, and human figures in order to recognize the pictorial garden. But the pictorial garden is *a* garden—a garden in its own right. If we speak of the picture as "representational" this need mean no more than that there is sufficient similarity between what we find within the frame and what we have encountered without to make it natural to use the same vocabulary ("moon," "tree," and so forth) to refer to both.[3]

[3]For the view that a pictorial garden is *a* garden, see Arnold Isenberg, "Perception, Meaning, and Subject-Matter of Art," *Journal of Philosophy*, XLI (1944), 561–75.

The poetic garden will be different. It will, no doubt, have its fountain or its peacock, its rose or its green shade, that is to say its visual evocation, however fragmentary. But it is significant that this evocation can be fragmentary. That will never be complained of if it is evident that the curtailment is in the interests of providing for elements of a different sort. Given the linguistic medium, the expressive possibilities of literary art will lie in the direction of integrating into one structural design materials derived from different levels or domains of experience. A poem is the sort of artistic structure in which it is possible to relate something as specific as the glossy shine on the blackbird's wing to something as comprehensive as a vision of human destiny. It is not that every poem is thus ambitious, but that we always have to reckon with such possibilities in our dealing with literature. The difference this makes is that a poem, or other work of literature, may be thought of not only as having a depth-structure but as possibly having a depth-structure that broadens out in its deeper strata and reaches in some way towards an inclusiveness that makes it competitive with other comparable works of literature.

If it must, then, be admitted that the issue of wisdom or insight in literature cannot be disposed of by saying that it is something exclusively concerned with the internal economy of the particular literary structure, and if this means that we must look beyond the boundaries of the literary work to arrive at an appraisal of greatness in literature, where shall we look? I think that there are three chief answers to this question and I believe that two of them are unsatisfactory.

One answer is that, since works of literature that aspire to comprehensiveness make implicit claims about the nature of man and the fundamental human condition, no work of literature can be considered "great" unless it conforms to some particular and true theoretical conception of the nature of the world and of man's position in it. This is an intelligible view, but to lovers of literature it is an embarrassing view for two reasons. In the first place, it requires the rejection of much that appeals to the literary sensibility as great. We do not, in point of fact, find the same theoretical conception implicit in Homer's *Iliad* and in Dante's *Commedia*. The second embarrassment of this view is even more distressing, for the view involves the assumption that literature is not itself a distinctive vehicle of insight. The utmost that a work of literature can do is to render persuasive a wisdom arrived at by other means and certified on other grounds. From this it is only a short step to the position that it is the business of the literary artist to recommend a philosophical *Weltanschauung* endorsed by superior authorities.

The second answer to the question about where to look is more liberal. Yet I believe it to be inadequate. This is the view that greatness in literature is discoverable by an appeal to something called "the test of life."

Superficially considered, it might seem that if literature is about human life or human experience we could test the adequacy of a presentation by scrutinizing the object of reference. The difficulty, however, is that the expressions "life" and "human experience" do not designate a sufficiently determinate entity to provide a basis for the formulation of a useful opinion on the issue of correctness or truth. If to this it be objected that, despite vagueness of reference, we do, in fact, draw on some fund of common-sense knowledge derived from the experience of living and the observation of our fellow men for the understanding of a work of literature, the fact can be acknowledged. There remains, however, the crucial question: How far will this carry us? Will it carry us beyond trivial truth to significant insight?

Every work of literature must contain the ingredient of trivial truth. Trivial truth is the known, the familiar, the obvious, that which "goes without saying." The function of trivial truth is to mediate significant insight. A work of literature must to some extent remind us of what we already know in order to tell us something new. But though trivial truth is a necessary ingredient, it becomes intolerable if it fails to function for other ends. Trivial truth and nothing but trivial truth is what produces the effect of the banal. Banality is a form of literary failure and no amount of laborious dwelling on how "true" it is will alter that situation.

Presumably no literary critic is going to judge greatness in literature on the basis of trivial truth. How, then, is his appraisal of greatness arrived at? If I should assert that the plays of Fletcher are great literature, what will a critic, who disagrees with this opinion, invite me to consider? Will he invite me to consider the events of my experience? Will he invite me to consider "the significance of life"? I think he will probably invite me to consider the plays of Shakespeare. The critic proceeds like Hamlet and says "look upon this" and then "look upon this." Can it plausibly be maintained that such a procedure is only a matter of convenience? Do we seriously believe that "had we but world enough, and time" it would be better to say to the admirer of the more trivial, the more limited, the more factitious in literature something such as: "Don't read any literature but try to acquire a greater experience of life and reflect on the import of it and then come back and read this poem and you will see how it fails to meet 'the

test of life' "? The alternative suggested is not as farfetched as it might seem. The world is full of intelligent people who have had a diverse experience of life but a very limited acquaintance with literature. Are not they in a better position to apply "the test of life," in all its purity, to the deliverances of a work of literature than those whose conception of what life might be has been radically formed and transformed by their experiences of literature?

I venture the assertion that a critic's appraisal of greatness in literature is arrived at, not by going to and fro in the earth but by extensive travel in the realm of literature. The appraisal of greatness is, and can only be, made on the basis of a comparison of works of literature with other comparable works of literature. What operates most powerfully is not the sense of what "life" *is* but the sense of what works of literature *can be*. What the critic must have above all is a highly developed sense of comparisons proper and comparisons odious, for if the critic is the presiding judge the verdict is provided by the jury and the jury consists of other works of literature. This is to say that, in the end, works of literature are judged by their peers; there can be no other judgment.

The illuminations provided by literature are the products of the literary imagination. The literary imagination can be nourished and stimulated by almost anything you might care to mention but it is a unique instrument of creation and transformation. With respect to the deliverances of literature nothing can be more authoritative than literature itself. The delusion that something designated as "life" has such greater authority will not survive any serious attempt at empirical test. If a man should confess that the complicated possibilities disclosed by a work of literature do not correspond to anything he has hitherto actually experienced in life, will any literary critic be given pause? Will he speculate on how characteristic, how typical, how representative this man is? Yet what is life except the totality of enacted human events both inner and outer, both conscious and unconscious? Whether or not an event has occurred is a question of matter-of-fact, but surely no work of literature can be challenged on the score of failure to conform to matter-of-fact. If, on the other hand, it be said that the "test of life" is not a matter of such conformity but a matter of whether the literary interpretation is a true interpretation of the import of these events, we still have difficulties. Will a literary critic be seriously troubled by the question: Is this literary interpretation more correct or could it be that I am fascinated by it because it is more interesting? I believe not. What are we to think of

an interpretation that operates to make over and transform the object interpreted? Perhaps it can be called an interpretation only in a Pickwickian sense.

Those who hold the view that literature must be judged exclusively by literary standards are often accused of "separating" literature from life. In point of fact, it is the view that literature should in some way conform to life that calls most insistently for this separation, for it is only if we can form an opinion on what life is, independent of the influence of literature upon it, that we have a chance to judge the issue of conformity. It seems to me that the real belief of lovers of literature is simply that life unnourished, untransformed, unrecreated by literature is not fit for human living.

My conclusion is that whatever be the complicated problems of determining criteria for the appraisal of literary success, and of kinds and modes of literary success, these problems must be dealt with by reference to the relevant data. The relevant data consist of the literary monuments themselves. Though no individual work of literature can have quite the autonomy of a non-linguistic art work, the realm of literature is autonomous. Its autonomy does not consist in its having "no relation to life." It is, indeed, nonsense to say that literature has no relation to life. Literature is created out of the raw material of experience, and literature, once created, modifies not only our conceptions of what life might be but transforms, in various subtle ways, the character of our lived experience. The autonomy of literature is its autonomy in point of authority. Nothing can seriously challenge the deliverances of a work of literature except another work of literature. What literature affords is vision and the proper rival of a vision is never an argument and never a fact, it is a counter-vision. If greatness in literature is not to be judged exclusively on the basis of the power of the literary art work to render persuasive a dogma or theory arrived at by other means and certified on other grounds, then it must be judged on the basis of a comparison of works of literature with works of literature. This judgment is arrived at within the realm of literature and justified by reference to what is discoverable within this domain. If greatness in literature amounts to something rather different from greatness in other arts, this need not surprise or puzzle us. Literature is a distinctive art with special peculiarities of its own. This is all we need to recognize in order to say that literary greatness is something literary; it is something achieved by the literary imagination, expressed in literary structure, and judged by literary standards.

MARLOW'S QUEST

JEROME THALE

CONRAD'S "Heart of Darkness" has all the trappings of the conventional adventure tale—mystery, exotic setting, escape, suspense, unexpected attack. These, of course, are only the vehicle of something more fundamental, and one way of getting at what they symbolize is to see the story as a grail quest. Though Conrad is sparing in his explicit use of the metaphor ("a weary pilgrimage amongst hints for nightmares"), it is implicit in the structure of the action. As in the grail quest there is the search for some object, and those who find and can see the grail receive an illumination. Marlow, the central figure, is like a knight seeking the grail, and his journey even to the end follows the archetype. His grandiose references to the dark places of the earth, his talk of the secret of a continent, the farthest point of navigation, his sudden and unwonted sense that he is off not to the centre of a continent but to the centre of the earth—these, occurring before he starts his journey, give it the atmosphere of a quest.

And in the journey itself there are the usual tests and obstacles of a quest. After Marlow passes through the bizarre company headquarters in Brussels and the inanity surrounding his voyage to the African coast, he makes a difficult and painful journey inland. At the central station he begins a seemingly routine task—going up the river to bring back a sick company agent—which will become his quest. Gradually he learns a little about Kurtz, at first a name; disgust with the manager and reports about the remarkable agent in the jungle make him increasingly eager to see the man. As Marlow's interest in Kurtz mounts, so do the trials and obstacles that are part of Marlow's test. The journey creeps on painfully in the patched ship. Near the end, just before the attack, Marlow realizes that Kurtz is the one thing he has been seeking, the "enchanted princess" in a "fabulous castle," whose approaches are fraught with danger.

The grail motif is of course connected with the profuse—and somewhat heavy-handed—light-darkness symbolism. The grail is an effulgence of light, and it gives an illumination to those who can see it. This is the light which Marlow seeks in the heart of darkness. The grail that he finds appears an abomination and the light even deeper darkness, yet paradoxically Marlow does have an illumination: "it threw a kind of light on everything about me." The manager and the others travelling with Marlow are constantly called pilgrims, "faithless pilgrims," and for the faithless there can be no illumination. At the

end of his quest Marlow does not find what he had expected all along, a good man in the midst of darkness and corruption. Instead he receives a terrible illumination. Such experiences are as ineffable as they are profound, and this is why the meaning of Marlow's tale must be expressed so obliquely, like the "glow that brings out the haze."

The nature of Marlow's illumination is determined by the remarkable man who is its occasion. And to comprehend Kurtz we must look into the reasons for Marlow's attitude towards him. Marlow is listening to the manager condemning Kurtz's methods as "unsound." "It seemed to me I had never breathed an atmosphere so vile, and I turned mentally to Kurtz for relief . . . it was something to have at least a choice of nightmares." Why must Marlow choose a nightmare at all? Because what he sees in one of the nightmares is so compelling that he cannot remain neutral before it.

Marlow's choice is made easier for the reader to accept by the fact that even before meeting Kurtz Marlow finds himself on Kurtz's side. Marlow has been disgusted by everything connected with the company; he learns that the manager schemes against Kurtz, because Kurtz, like Marlow, is one of the new gang, "the gang of virtue." The unseen apostle of light becomes the alternative to the cowardly plunderers. But Marlow is not trapped into an incredible allegiance; he knows what he is choosing when he later makes his real choice. Nor is it an unconsidered gesture of escape from the moral decay of the hollow men. His choice is a deliberate one.

Given Marlow's nature and his function in the story his choice must be based on something positive in Kurtz. There are strong hints in the story that Kurtz is a good man gone wrong in the jungle. But if he is merely a victim of unusual circumstances, a man to be pitied, then Marlow's choice is as sentimental as that of Kurtz's fiancée. The causes of Kurtz's tragedy are within—in his towering ambition, and his rootless idealism. Yet the jungle is important, for what happens to Kurtz can happen only under some such conditions. And what Marlow values in Kurtz is so paradoxical that it can be seen only against a dark and mysterious jungle and the corruption of colonial exploitation.

What is it in Kurtz that compels a choice and that produces such a profound change in the imperturbable Marlow? Simply that Kurtz has discovered himself, has become fully human; and Marlow's illumination, the light that is his grail, is a similar discovery about himself and all men.

Marlow tells us in "Youth" that the wreck of the *Judea* was "the endeavor, the test, the trial of life . . . a chance to find out what one can do." "Heart of Darkness," in spite of its stagey background, treats

this theme of self-discovery in a much less romantic, and, I think, more profound way than "Youth." Here self-discovery is not just the thrill of finding out what one can do, but the deeper task of finding out what one is, of coming to grips with the existence of the self.

The discovery of what it means to be is not easy. "There's no initiation into such mysteries"; there can only be a confrontation. Only Kurtz, and in a lesser degree Marlow, make the breakthrough. The experience gives a man knowledge that leaves him uneasy with himself and contemptuous of those who do not have it. Hence Marlow's caustic tone to his hearers, safely insulated against such knowledge, "each moored with two good addresses, like a hulk with two anchors, a butcher round one corner, a policeman round another, excellent appetites, and temperature normal." Marlow emphasizes that Kurtz is wasted and feverish from this knowledge; "it was not disease"—only the outward manifestation of what went on in Kurtz. Marlow with his own awareness is disgusted with the people he sees on the streets in Brussels: "Their bearing, which was simply the bearing of commonplace individuals, going about their business in the assurance of perfect safety, was offensive to me like the outrageous flauntings of folly in the face of a danger it is unable to comprehend."

Existence is dangerous, menacing; too dangerous for most of us to discover. Illusion and ignorance, which Conrad treats with a mixture of indulgence and scorn, are what save most of us. "The inner truth is hidden,—luckily, luckily." Women are fortunate to be out of it, living in a beautiful world that does not admit and cannot stand the light. What Marlow has learned through Kurtz he feels he must withhold from Kurtz's fiancée, for it is perilous to "the salvation of another soul." "I could not tell her," Marlow says, "It would have been too dark—too dark altogether."

For such a discovery the context of Africa is important and necessary. From the first pages this is impressed upon us. Marlow opens his tale suddenly and mysteriously, "And this too has been one of the dark places of the earth." The Romans who came to Britain, says Marlow with some irony, were men enough to face the darkness. In some inland post one of them felt the savagery that had closed round him, "that mysterious life of the wilderness that stirs in the forest, in the jungles, in the hearts of wild men." He has to live "in the midst of the incomprehensible, which is also detestable. And it has a fascination, too, that goes to work upon him. . . . Imagine the growing regrets, the longing to escape, the powerless disgust, the surrender, the hate!"

The importance of this kind of milieu is developed through both

symbol and statement, and Marlow seems at times to suggest that Africa had been the cause of Kurtz's destruction. "It had caressed him . . . got into his veins, consumed his flesh, and sealed his soul to its own." But there can be no mistake: Kurtz is not a passive victim of Africa. Africa is like existence, is truth. In contrast to the muddle and haze of the company's operations, Africa is real. The blacks have a vitality "that is as natural and true as the surf along the coast." And Marlow altogether prefers his crew of cannibals to his passengers. Ironically, what is dark in "darkest Africa" is not the land or the people, but the world introduced by the bringers of light and civilization.

In another sense, however, Africa seems dark. The jungle is "a rioting invasion of soundless life, a rolling wave of plants, piled up, crested, ready to topple over the creek, to sweep every little man of us out of his little existence." Africa seems dark because it is the test, the condition under which one can come into contact with the self. The journey to the heart of Africa is the journey into the depths of the self: Kurtz and Marlow travel into the heart of Africa and into the heart of man. The knowledge that is there is so terrifying that its occasion must seem sinister too.

In the depth of the jungle, Marlow tells us repeatedly, one is on one's own; there is no external restraint. "Anything can be done in this country." One feels, and Marlow says that one ought to feel, atavistic impulses, a "kinship with that wild passionate uproar." "If you were man enough you would admit to yourself that there was in you just the faintest trace of a response to the terrible frankness of that noise, a dim suspicion of there being a meaning which you so remote from the night of first ages could comprehend." Africa awakens "forgotten and brutal instincts . . . the memory of gratified and monstrous passions." It "whispered to him things about himself which he did not know, things of which he had no conception till he took counsel with this great solitude—and the whisper proved irresistibly fascinating." Outside some such context existence in its simplicity cannot be met. Too many things keep us from travelling into the interior of the self in which we exist.

> You can't understand. How could you?—with solid pavement under your feet, surrounded by kind neighbors ready to cheer you or to fall on you, stepping delicately between the butcher and the policeman, in the holy terror of scandal and gallows and lunatic asylums—how can you imagine what particular region of the first ages a man's untrammelled feet may take him into by the way of solitude—utter solitude without a policeman—by the way of silence—utter silence, where no warning voice of a kind neighbor can be heard whispering of public opinion.

Kurtz's experience of the way of silence, the way of solitude, is like that of the mystics: the withdrawal from the world into silence and solitude to come into contact with the self. The solitude of the heart of Africa is symbolically appropriate for such an operation. Here Kurtz is free externally and internally. In the depths of Africa Kurtz is not hampered by outside restraint. Paralleling this he has journeyed into the depths of the primal self where there are no internal checks on his freedom. The setting of the discovery is aboriginal in the anthropological sense, and, more than this, it is ab-original in a metaphysical sense. Kurtz's soul "being alone in the wilderness . . . had looked within itself, and by heavens! I tell you it had gone mad." For in the mind of man, which "contains all things," there are terrifying possibilities.

And the discovery of the self is the discovery of one's freedom. Away from the grooves that society provides for keeping us safely in a state of subsisting, we can discover that we are free to be, to do anything, good or evil. For the mystic it means the freedom to love God. For Kurtz it means the freedom to become his own diabolical god. This radical freedom as it exists in Kurtz seems to Marlow both exalting and revolting. Exalting because it makes man human, revolting because in Kurtz it is so perverted and so absolute as to exceed all human limits and become inhuman. By distinguishing these two aspects of Marlow's response, we can make meaningful his commitment to Kurtz. To put it another way, we can sum up the two aspects of Kurtz's freedom in the phrase "I am." On the one hand, to say "I am," is to say that I exist, to say that I am free and have immense possibilities in my grasp. On the other, "I am" is the phrase which only God can utter, because only God exists simply and completely. For Kurtz to say "I am" is the ultimate and complete assertion of himself to the exclusion of all else, the assertion that he is a god.

Before Kurtz's discovery of his existence can become Marlow's illumination it has to be realized by both of them. The revelation proceeds through Kurtz to Marlow, and Marlow's full illumination, his full realization of what it means to be, must wait upon a realization in Kurtz that brings out and confirms what Marlow has already seen in him. A final awareness in Kurtz is needed to make meaningful and universalize Kurtz's experience. For Kurtz has accepted his freedom, has become human, but he has not evaluated what being human means. He must assent to the knowledge he has been trying to keep off. This realization, which must be distinguished from the agonizing discovery of his existence, can come only as its fruit. Authentic self-knowledge demands a real existent as its object. Having discovered

that he can exist, Kurtz must now evaluate existence. "The horror! the horror" is this evaluation.

The most we can hope for in life, Marlow tells us, is "some knowledge of yourself—that comes too late." Marlow comes close to death and finds that he has nothing to say. Kurtz "had something to say. He said it. Since I had peeped over the edge myself, I understand better the meaning of his stare, that could not see the flame of the candle, but was wide enough to embrace the whole universe, piercing enough to penetrate all the hearts that beat in the darkness."

Only after Marlow passes his final test, his brush with death, does the full significance of Kurtz come to him. Kurtz's last cry takes us to the meaning of the whole African venture for Marlow, the illumination he receives. For Marlow sees that Kurtz's cry is more than self-knowledge, more than an insight into the depths of his own evil. It is an insight into the potentialities in all men, it gives the perspective in which we must see Kurtz's discovery of himself. Kurtz's cry is no deathbed repentance which makes him a hero to whom Marlow can be loyal. It is for Marlow a terrible illumination, for in Kurtz Marlow discovers not simply one man become evil, but a universal possibility. Deprived of the insulation of society, the protecting surface, faced with the terrible challenge, we discover that we are free; the very fact is terrifying, for in that choice lies the unpredictable, even the Kurtzian.

Marlow's illumination comes only after Kurtz's last words and after Marlow's encounter with death; his choice of nightmares is not based on this evaluation. Marlow has chosen before Kurtz utters his cry, and the cry only enables Marlow to see more fully what he has already seen at the time of his choice. At the time he chooses Kurtz, Marlow declares that Kurtz is "remarkable," and to the end of the story he uses no stronger—indeed no other—epithet than this. Its occasional ironic uses only point up its understatement. And "remarkable" is Marlow's comment on Kurtz's acceptance of his freedom.

And this is so remarkable that Marlow chooses it even in a man like Kurtz, a man who actualizes his existence only in the evil fulfilment of a monstrous megalomania. What Marlow values in Kurtz is both moral and non-moral. Moral because whether a man exists, has the capacity to act as a human being, is the most important moral fact about him. Non-moral because existence is prior to morality considered as a set of norms for acting and judging conduct. Kurtz's triumph is ontological. He existed as a human being capable of good and evil. His tragedy is moral, for he existed subject to no law or standard.

Marlow finds it hard to explain Kurtz and justify his own stand. He keeps telling his hearers, "You couldn't understand." His evalua-

tion of Kurtz is presented through a series of contrasts and antitheses. The manager is a "flabby, pretending, weak-eyed devil," the brick-maker a "papier mâché Mephistopheles." Marlow prefers to these the devils of violence, greed, desire, for they are "strong, lusty, red-eyed devils, that sway and drive men," real devils that at least demand some commitment of the self. Kurtz is a genuine devil, a god in his Satanic rites. He can inspire horror and revulsion in Marlow, whereas the manager, neither feared nor loved, inspires only "uneasiness." Kurtz commits himself totally to evil, the manager keeps up appearances. Kurtz throws himself into action, though evil; the manager, ruled by caution, murmurs, and does evil by omission.

What is evil in the manager and his men is not their conniving, their opportunism, their neglect of Kurtz, but their moral impotence. In Kurtz evil is incarnate. In the company men evil is a privation, not of goodness but of existence. Marlow condemns them on ontological as much as moral grounds. Too self-loving, too much the victims of their own life-killing prudence for a surrender even to evil, they are, like Leon Bloy's middle class, incapable of mortal sin. They are not evil, for they are not even alive, not capable of the humanity involved in making a choice for good or evil. Kurtz has made the journey to the depths of the self, he has responded to the fascinating and terrible appeal of existence. His choice is for evil, but it is a human choice—and it is to this humanity that Marlow turns with positive relief, even though it is a nightmare.

And it is a nightmare of enormous proportions. Kurtz fails so horribly because he has no "inborn strength," no capacity for faithfulness, no code. Marlow's usual term for this is "restraint." The more one has realized himself, and become capable of all things, the more restraint is needed. And Marlow makes a great deal of restraint. He is amazed at the restraint in the cannibals that keeps them from eating the pilgrims. The manager's restraint, keeping up appearances, is but a parody that excites Marlow's scorn and makes the manager worse than Kurtz. The accountant immaculately dressed amidst moral and physical disintegration, keeping his books in apple pie order though a dying man lies on the floor, is admirable because he has some order, some code, some commitment outside the self. This is why the seamanship manual, with its "simple-hearted devotion to the right way of doing things," seems so precious to Marlow; it is a symbol of the restraint, the devotion, that both Kurtz and the manager lack.

Neither Kurtz with his abandon, nor the manager with his getting on in the world, has this restraint, this "devotion to the backbreaking business" rather than to the self. The self unharnessed must be used in

terms of something outside itself. Better live by an absurd code, like the accountant, than by none at all. As Marlow says, "What redeems it is the idea only . . . an unselfish belief in the idea—something you can set up, and bow down before, and offer a sacrifice to." Marlow is ironic when he applies the phrase to the Romans, but the irony is lifted as the story progresses. And in Kurtz's final cry the "idea" becomes part of Marlow's illumination. Kurtz, living outside all norms, yet knows that they exist and condemn him. Implicit in his cry is an admission of what he has evaded, a realization of the insufficiency of his total commitment to himself and of the validity of the standards which condemn him. And through Kurtz, Marlow, the seaman who has always lived by a code, grasps its necessity and its validity.[1]

This is the last stage of Marlow's initiation, of his confrontation with what it means to be human. Kurtz is the grail at the end of Marlow's quest, and of all those who come into contact with Kurtz only Marlow—the faithful pilgrim—experiences an illumination. The manager reduces Kurtz to his own terms and cannot see him. The Russian sailor, who admires Kurtz, is too much a fool—perhaps a wise fool—to recognize the challenge that Kurtz has met. The two women each see and love Kurtz, but a false Kurtz, a lie, which Marlow must meet with another lie.

Most people are not capable of understanding Kurtz; the policeman and the two good addresses shelter them from the terror of being. But Marlow has had his illumination, and like Gulliver come back to England, he cannot stand the smug faces of the people walking down the streets, unaware of the challenge and the danger. Their knowledge of life seems "an irritating pretense." They do not know that they are and therefore they are not. Marlow scorns them because in the quest for Kurtz he has discovered the dreadful burden of human freedom. His full illumination, his grail, is not transcendent being but the heart of man. Yet it demands the same tests in the journey of purification and produces an illumination equally awful.

[1]That it can be interpreted as a Freudian allegory testifies to the richness and validity of Conrad's story. Kurtz is like the id, the unharnessed primal forces. The manager represents a crushing amount of super-ego that destroys life by its timid and fearful unwillingness to release and use those forces. Marlow, at least at the end of the story, stands for ego, an awareness of the forces within him and a conscious use and control of them. His journey is a symbol of the process through which we discover the deepest recesses of the self and make use of its power. Whether the whole story could be adequately described in terms of some such allegory I do not know; certainly, much of the imagery of darkness and the jungle makes sense in those terms.

THE STORM SCENE IN *PARADISE REGAINED*: A REINTERPRETATION

DICK TAYLOR, JR.

COMMENTATORS on *Paradise Regained* have generally considered that Christ's rejection of Satan's offer of learning is the concluding incident in the second temptation; that the coming of night marks the close of the offer of the kingdoms of the world; and that the storm episode which follows either is an interlude between the second and third temptation or is connected with the third temptation on the pinnacle, as a link or prologue. Invariably they interpret this episode as a use of violence by an enraged and despairing Satan to terrorize Christ.[1]

Milton's strong sense of evenly blocked organization[2] would lend support to the view that the whole temptation in *Paradise Regained* is neatly divided into days, with the episode of learning the concluding incident of the second day and with the night which contains the storm marking the episode's close. However, in his great expansion of

[1]E. M. W. Tillyard has said in his *Milton* (London, 1930), 327, that after Christ's refusal of learning Satan, in despair, "turns from the subtle tempter of the mind to a crude physical bully: Night intervenes between the second and the third temptations, and in it Satan manufactures a storm with which to terrify the Son of God. Finding it to have no effect, he is 'swoln with rage' and loses his judgment." Professor Tillyard then briefly discusses the pinnacle scene. Dr. Elizabeth Marie Pope, in *Paradise Regained, the Tradition and the Poem* (Johns Hopkins, 1947), 6, speaks of the "banqueting scene that precedes the offer of the kingdoms and the storm scene which follows it." Elsewhere she writes (p. 93) that Satan takes Christ "back to the wilderness at the end of the second day, pretends to leave him, and then raises a dreadful storm 'to tempt the Son of God with terrors dire.' " See also pp. 96–7; and further p. 99, where she says, "as a result, the formal temptation of violence had to be pushed back and given independent treatment in the storm scene, though it remains closely associated with the *mitte te deorsum* and is of much the same character. . . ." In her brief glance at the aspect of portents in the episode, she sees the storm only as an instrument of violence to terrorize, as she says (p. 93) that Satan "first attempts to cow the Lord by warning him that the storm portends his future." She then goes on to develop further the theory of Satan's violence and enraged despair. Professor Allan H. Gilbert in "The Temptation in *Paradise Regained*," *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, XV (1916), 607, has written: "The second attempt fully concluded, Satan, who through it all has not left the side of Christ, departs, or rather feigns to depart. Night follows, separating the second encounter from the third, just as night divides the first from the second. On the morning of the third, and last day, Satan reappears for the third temptation, which is that Christ shall cast himself down from the pinnacle of the temple." Professor Hanford does not treat the storm scene in his *Milton Handbook* (New York, 1947), but (pp. 278–9) considers the episode of learning to be the conclusion of the second temptation, and the method on the pinnacle to be "that of violence."

[2]As Arthur Barker has shown in "The Pattern of Milton's Nativity Ode," *University of Toronto Quarterly*, X (1941), 167–81 and "Structural Pattern in *Paradise Lost*," *Philological Quarterly*, XVIII (1949), 15–30.

the second temptation, Milton has shown that he is not aiming at consistently even division, and although there are passages in the text which have led to these interpretations of the method and structural relationship of the storm scene and support them, it does not seem to me that what actually happens in the speech and action of the episode fits with these interpretations. Consequently, in this paper I am proposing a different one: that the storm scene is neither an interlude, nor a link, nor a prologue; that it is not a move by a desperate and enraged Satan to terrorize Christ but that it constitutes in itself a forceful temptation, shrewdly devised and skilfully carried out by a calculating Satan in pursuance of an objective of temptation already set.

There are three main points concerned in the establishment of this interpretation. (1) The theme of the storm scene is specifically that of the second temptation, further developed in a new phase; thus the storm scene is actually a part of the second temptation, and it, not the offer of learning, is the concluding phase; hence, night does not mark off the end of this series of trials but, as the vehicle of the storm, is rather an implementing agent in Satan's further strategy in pressing his offer of kingship, or power. (2) The method of the trial in the storm does not involve violence and terror by Satan so much as the temptation for Christ to follow false portents—to be deceived into reading false signs as evidence of God's will that he should assume power under Satan's auspices. This temptation involving portents, as I shall show directly, would have been highly meangingful in Milton's age, and particularly at the time when he was composing *Paradise Regained*. (3) Concerning the conflicting passages in the text, which have been the basis of the long-held interpretations, I shall offer two suggestions: first, the passages which describe Satan as in despairing rage and without further scheme are less conflicting than appears, since Milton throughout the poem has consistently described Satan in similar terms; second, that Milton, either during the course of composition or afterward, possibly altered his original treatment of the storm episode, giving Satan a strategy of false portents instead of the original strategy of terror, but that in his reworking he did not completely eradicate elements of the original.

I

Satan's use of false portents as a means of temptation would have been immediately understood in England in the early Restoration, for among the English people at this period there was a profound and

widespread concern with star reading, heavenly signs, prodigies, and portents.[3] Astrologers were plying a busy trade[4]—Dryden himself studied his horoscope; and the air was alive with concern over the prophetic or admonitory significance of prodigies in nature and various unusual happenings.

Actually for centuries before this period the English had devoted themselves to star reading and to various forms of prophecy from signs and from dreams; and significantly there had also been much controversy over the validity or the righteousness of such prophesying.[5] Near the period with which we are concerned, Sir Thomas Browne reveals an awareness of the temptation to misinterpret natural events. In the *Pseudodoxia Epidemia* (1646) he says (I, chap. xi), "To behold a Rainbow in the night, is no prodigy unto a Philosopher. Than Eclipses of the Sun or Moon, nothing is more natural. Yet with what superstition they have been beheld since the Tragedy of Nicias and his Army, many examples declare." In the early Restoration, however, as Professor Hooker has pointed out, the emotions of the nation were particularly in a turmoil about prodigies and heavenly signs, and about the interpretation of these as warnings from God of his displeasure. According to Professor Hooker, "for years the minds of the people had been conditioned to expect disasters of extraordinary reach, which were to occur in the 1660's. The number of the year 1666 seemed fraught with supernatural significance, partly because 666 has the properties of a mystic symbol, and partly because 666 is mentioned in the very obscure 'prophecy' of Revelations 13:18."[6] William Lilly, on the basis of his astrological computations and of the Bible, had predicted in *The Worlds Catastrophes* (1647), that a series of broils and tumults would follow 1660 and end in 1666 with the

[3]For an illuminating treatment of the preoccupation with portents, prodigies, and signs manifested by the English in the 1660's, see Edward N. Hooker, "The Purpose of Dryden's *Annus Mirabilis*," in *Studies . . . in Honor of Arthur Ellicott Case* (Augustan Reprint Society, 1953), 121–39, originally published in the *Huntington Library Quarterly*, X (1946), 46–67. I have used the pagination of the original. I should like to acknowledge here my considerable indebtedness to Professor Hooker's article.

[4]See Don Cameron Allen, *The Star-Crossed Renaissance* (Durham, 1941). Although Professor Allen's book deals primarily with the Renaissance, pp. 242–3 contain an account of works during the later seventeenth century satirizing astrology and other forms of prognosticating.

[5]For example, see Hooker, "Dryden's *Annus Mirabilis*," 56, n. 15. Allen, *Star-Crossed Renaissance*, has made clear not only the popularity of star reading throughout the centuries but also the considerable controversy about its propriety or validity. See also Rupert Taylor, *The Political Prophecy in England* (Columbia, 1911) for a study of political prophecying from signs. Pp. 104 ff. contain a brief account of laws passed against such prophecying by various sovereigns.

[6]Hooker, "Dryden's *Annus Mirabilis*," 56.

"pulverization of all false religions."[7] John Spencer complained in 1665 that "Tis a time wherein (as 'tis usual) Folly is as busy as Wisdom. Never greater talk of terrific *Signs, Revelations, Prophecies* and *Visions* in our own and other kingdoms then now."[8] With such general concern abroad in the land over prodigies, pointed for so long directly at the year 1666, terrible supernatural significance was attached to the comet of 1664,[9] the defeats by the Dutch, the plague, and the fire.

In the years immediately following 1660, a considerable body of writing appeared which included not only descriptions and interpretations of the stars, prodigies in nature, and other signs throughout the land, but also discussion of the vexing problems of truth or falsehood involved in interpretation and prophesying. The controversy over the proper interpretation of signs rose to new heights because of the political and religious strife between the now displaced Puritans and the re-established Royalists and Anglicans. The Puritans were eager to seize upon every possible incident as a revelation of God's wrath towards the English people who had recalled Charles and the bishops. Above immediate controversy, however, was John Smith's *Of Prophecies*, in his *Select Discourses*, 1660, although Smith broadly discussed the problem of true and false prophecies, proper methods of divination, and true values in revelation.[10] According to Professor William B. Hunter, Jr., Smith based his work mainly upon two long established authorities, Maimonides and Joseph Albo, the former of whom Milton certainly studied.[11] The lighter side of the controversy appears in *Montelion* (also 1660), a satire on astrology by Milton's nephew, John Philips.[12] The Puritan strategy was strongly activated by three works, *Mirabilis Annus, the year of Prodigies*, 1661, followed by *Mirabilis Annus Secundus: or, the Second Year of Prodigies*, 1662, and then later in the same year, *Mirabilis Annus Secundus: or, the*

[7]William Lilly, *The World's Catastrophes* (London, 1647), 32–4; cited in Hooker, 56. See also Taylor, *Political Prophecy*, 100–4 for a discussion of Lilly's *Monarchy or No Monarchy* (1651), in which Lilly proved that favourable Royalist prophecies were false and that no more kings were to be allowed England; Puritan prophecying and sign reading in the 1660's were bent towards proving that the restoration of Charles was against the scheme of things.

[8]Spencer will be discussed presently in the paper.

[9]Pepys, *Diary*, 15, 17, 21, 23, 24, 27 December 1664, and 6 April, 1665.

[10]See Basil Willey, *The Seventeenth Century Background* (London, 1934), 145 ff. for a discussion of Smith. Part of this deals with the treatise on prophecying.

[11]William B. Hunter, Jr., "Prophetic Dreams and Visions in *Paradise Lost*," *Modern Language Quarterly*, IX (1948), 277–85. As Professor Hunter has pointed out, Milton quotes twice from Maimonides's *Moreh Nebuchim or Guide of the Perplexed*, referring to the Latin translation published by Buxtorf in 1629. Although neither passage relates to prophecy, the quotations show Milton's acquaintance with the work.

[12]*Montelion* is cited by Allen, *Star-Crossed Renaissance*, p. 243.

Second Part of the Second Years Prodigies. These three lengthy pamphlets gave numerous detailed accounts of marvellous dislocations of varied kinds in nature and in human actions throughout the land, all presumably revealing God's wrath because of the recall of Charles and the expulsion of the Puritan polity.[13] This Puritan argumentation proved highly effective and disturbing, so that friends of the Crown and the Church took counteractive measures. In 1663 John Spencer published *A Discourse concerning Prodigies*, which he brought out again in 1665, with an added treatise on vulgar prophecies, now entitled *A Discourse concerning Prodigies: Wherein the Vanity of Presages by them is reprehended and their true and proper Ends asserted and vindicated . . . To which is added a short treatise concerning Vulgar Prophecies.* Dr. Isaac Barrow and John Tillotson also contributed sermons concerning the burning issue of interpretation of prodigies; but, as Professor Hooker has shown, their opinions were divided: Barrow combatted the popular inclination to prophesy from prodigies, but Tillotson saw the working of God in the plague of 1665 and the fire of 1666.

Hence, in the period when Milton was writing *Paradise Regained*—possibly at the exact time that he was working on the storm scene—the English people's racking concern over the interpretation of prodigies, long focused on 1666, was rising to a high pitch. Although Milton had for many years contemplated the subject of *Paradise Regained*, it seems likely to me that he was actually in the process of composition in 1666 during the height of this concern.[14] He could hardly have been unaware of the excitement and controversies over the various prodigies and their interpretation; and since from his early years he had concerned himself with the problem of true and false prophecy and revelation, the contemporary situation would have been of especial interest to him. The Nativity Ode reveals his early attraction to the accounts of the false oracles of the fallen gods. As Professor Hunter has shown, he was familiar with the work of Maimonides, and his treatment of prophetic dreams and visions in *Paradise Lost* indicates a deep and close acquaintance with the traditional concepts and methods of handling these.[15] His disapproval of easy and vulgar

[13]See Hooker, "Dryden's *Annus Mirabilis*," 53–5, for an account of these pamphlets.

[14]The import of Ellwood's account of his visits to Milton in 1665 and 1666 is that Milton had not begun actual or substantial composition on the poem in 1665, and that he wrote it, or at least most of it, between the two visits mentioned by Ellwood, thus at the height of the turmoil over portents.

[15]Hunter, "Prophetic Dreams and Visions in *Paradise Lost*," *passim*; see the full and wide-ranging notes of Professor Merritt Y. Hughes in his *Paradise Regained, the Minor Poems*, etc. (New York, 1937), pp. 462–5 and 524.

prophesying and sign reading, particularly as a shifting of personal responsibility, is clear from his statement in *Of Reformation*: "Let the Astrologer be dismay'd at the portentous blaze of comets and impressions in the aire as foretelling troubles and changes to states: I shall believe that there cannot be a more illboding signe to a Nation (God turne the Omen from us) then when the Inhabitants, to avoid unsufferable grievances are inforc'd by heaps to forsake their native country."[16] But his belief that at proper times God makes known his mind and will to man is clear from the *Areopagitica*, wherein he reveals his conviction that God has signified to England his choice of herself and her people as leader among the nations and peoples: "yet that which is above all this, the favour and the love of heav'n, we have great argument to think in a peculiar manner propitious and propending towards us. Why else was This Nation chos'n before any other, that out of her as out of *Sion* should be proclam'd and sounded forth the first tidings and trumpet of Reformation to all *Europ*."[17] Thus, although he was inimical to vulgar and hysterical sign reading, he believed that God revealed his mind and will to man at the proper times. Man must distinguish by his reason the true from the false.

Signs, portents, prophecies, and revelations have a noteworthy role in *Paradise Regained*. Throughout Milton has treated with great prominence the various true prophecies and revelations concerning the Messiah. He has called marked attention to the prophecy concerning Christ's accession to the throne of David.[18] In his first soliloquy Christ remembers his mother's instruction about the report of the messenger from God that

> Thou [Christ] shouldst be great and sit on David's Throne,
> And of thy Kingdom there should be no end. (I, 240–1)[19]

Later he recalls her story of the wise men who followed the star "By which they knew thee King of *Israel* born" (I, 254). After the baptism, the "Plain Fishermen" are hopeful that

> Now, now for sure, deliverance is at hand
> The kingdom shall to *Israel* be restor'd. . . . (II, 35–6)

[16]Columbia Milton, III, 50. Also see *Christian Doctrine*, I, x, for another instance of Milton's unfavourable attitude toward astrology.

[17]*Areopagitica*, Columbia Milton, IV, 340.

[18]The biblical basis is Luke i, 32–3: "The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: [33] And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever. . . ."

[19]Throughout I am quoting from the text of *Paradise Regained* in the edition of Professor Hughes cited above, n. 15.

Early in the second temptation, Christ reminds Satan of the prophecy, as he speaks of

> the Shepherd lad,
> Whose off-spring on the throne of Judah sat
> So many Ages, and shall yet regain
> That seat, and reign in Israel without end. (II, 439–42)

Milton has also laid great emphasis on God's revelations of the coming of the Son. Early in Book I (24–36) there is the account of God's warning to John the Baptist, whereby he was able to recognize the Son. At the baptism the spirit descends in "likeness of a Dove" and the Father's voice speaks from Heaven to announce the Son. In Book I (130 ff.) God refers to his "solemn message late" to Mary concerning the birth of the Son to her. Then Mary (II, 83–5) speaks of the baptism scene and of God's public announcement through the descent of the Dove. In his first soliloquy Christ cites several true signs from God: the angels' revelations to the shepherds in the fields; the star which guided the Wise Men; the visions of Simeon and Anna, and their prophecies therefrom; and the signs of God at the baptism.

Satan himself is shown to be aware of the prophecies; he uses them in his temptations of Christ. Also, signs and portents have long been one of his most frequently used and highly prized methods of operation, as he reveals in the first temptation, when, in protesting to Christ his own real affection for men, he claims that he has lent them

> oft my aid,
> Oft my advice by presages and signs
> And answers, oracles, portents, and dreams
> Whereby they may direct their future life. (I, 393–6)

And in Satan's own words the problem of true and false revelation is proposed: at the baptism scene he is not wholly convinced that there has been a true revelation—or at least he does not allow himself to be convinced, for his only hope is that the signs identifying the Son are false.

In view of such emphasis throughout *Paradise Regained* on prophecies and signs, against the perspective of true or false revelation, it seems almost a certainty that the contemporary interest in prodigies and portents has a significant bearing on this aspect of the poem. It should be no surprise, if Satan attempted to use false prodigies and portents as a method of tempting Christ.

II

To show the integral thematic and structural relationship of the storm scene with the second temptation it will be necessary to recall

briefly the large pattern of the second temptation and then to concentrate in some detail on the offer of learning. This latter episode has long been of interest to Milton scholars because of questions raised by Christ's discussion of learning in his rejoinder to Satan. But a highly significant element in the episode has not been sufficiently noted. What is wrong with Satan's offer is that the glories of ancient learning and culture which he describes are only a subtle disguise for his real purpose, to further tempt Christ with premature and unauthorized kingship. Hence, the temptation to kingdom, or rule, does not actually conclude with the offer of the throne of all the world; it continues unbroken into the episode of learning. Nor does it break off with this episode but continues through the storm scene.

In the second temptation, Satan, in every phase, is offering Christ power—or control over others—on a grand scale. He first offers power disguised by luxury, wealth, and glory, and then power outright in political domination through kingship. He focuses the temptation to kingship specifically on Christ's prophesied accession to the throne of David, a sound strategy in view of the prominence which has been given this prophecy. In fact, Christ's reminder of this prophecy (II, 439–42) may have given Satan the idea of this focus. Previously in the council of the devils, Satan had told his cohorts that Christ is to be

> . . . head of the Nations . . .
> Their King, their Leader, and Supreme on Earth. (I, 98–9)

His statement in the council suggests the idea for the second temptation but does not refer to David's throne. Possibly, then, Christ's words give him the hint for his strategy. When he changes his tactics to offer Christ outright power through rule, David's throne is the first that he holds forth, and he prefaces his offer by a reminder of the prophecy:

> But to a Kingdom thou art born, ordain'd
> To sit upon thy Father David's Throne. . . . (III, 152–3)

Satan, then makes the subsequent offers of Parthia and Rome with the persuasive argument that Christ will need to control these empires in order to maintain his rightful position on the throne prophesied to him.

Christ's assumption of David's throne is focal not only in the temptation of the thrones of all the world, but also in the temptation of learning. Throughout this episode Satan is always speaking within a frame of reference which is Christ's accession to this throne, and in his address he subtly but plainly associates the glories of classical thought and culture with power and rule, and with the control which

Christ will presumably need in his new position of authority.[20] Satan exhorts Christ:

> Be famous then
> By Wisdom; as thy *Empire must extend,*
> So let *extend thy mind o'er the world,*
> In Knowledge.... (IV, 221–4)

He advises that the learning of the Gentiles will be of much help to Christ in ruling them:

> And with the Gentiles much thou must converse,
> *Ruling them by persuasion* as thou mean'st.... (IV, 229–30)

Then in his list of the "schools of the ancient Sages" from which Christ can profit, the first which he names is that of Aristotle, significant to him, as he reveals, not because of its great moral and ethical force but because Aristotle "bred Great *Alexander* to *subdue the world.*" Satan's words here recall his earlier speech in the offer of glory, which praises Christ as one of the "most erected Spirits," but also chides him for not following the example of Alexander:

> Thy years are ripe, and over-ripe, the Son
> Of *Macedonian Philip* had ere these
> *Won Asia and the Throne of Cyrus held*
> *At his dispose....* (III, 31–4)

Satan promises that in these schools Christ shall

> hear and learn the secret *power*
> Of harmony in tones and numbers hit
> By voice or hand (IV, 254–6)

and that he shall listen to the noble Greek poetry, significant here because it recounts "High actions and high passions" (IV, 266). Again one thinks of an earlier speech in which Satan, in offering wealth as a means of power, compliments Christ because "all thy heart is set on high designs, High actions" (II, 410–11). Next, Satan describes the schools of oratory, wherein the great speakers learned and practised their art, speakers

> whose *resistless* eloquence
> *Wielded at will that fierce Democraty....* (IV, 268–9)

And not only do the orators help in maintaining power but also the philosophers, whose

> rules will render thee a King complete
> Within thyself, *much more with empire joined.* (IV, 283–4)

[20]To make clearer Satan's preoccupation with power and rule in this episode, I have italicized in the quotations which follow words and phrases which reveal his real point of view and his real intent.

Thus even in the offer of learning, or the ostensible offer of learning, Satan is continuing his attempts to lure Christ into a premature acceptance of David's throne through his own aid. The concluding lines of Christ's rejoinder (353–64) indicate that he understands this aspect of Satan's offer, for he takes up again the problem he has discussed so perceptively in previous speeches, good kingship. In the storm scene, as I shall show in the immediately following analysis, Satan has not changed his objective. He is still trying to persuade Christ to accept David's throne now through his own aid; he is merely trying a new method, or trick.

After Christ rejects the offer of learning, Satan, although described as "Quite at a loss for all his darts were spent," nevertheless promptly replies with a "stern brow"; neither in his manner, his brisk action, nor in his sharp speech, does he betray any indecision or despair, but immediately and decisively begins a new method of attack. The strategy which he now follows is cleverly devised and energetically and plausibly carried out. First, he warns Christ of the error of rejecting his aid to the throne, particularly in view of the fact that Christ, now in full maturity,[21] is at the very stage of development proper for the fulfilment of the prophecies. Thus immediately Satan reveals that his objective is the same as in the previous incidents, premature kingship; further he hits the note of prophecy, the basis of the new stratagem:

> Yet remember
> What I foretell thee, soon thou shalt have cause
> To wish thou never hadst rejected thus
> Nicely or cautiously my offer'd aid,
> Which should have set thee in short time with ease
> On *David's* throne; or Throne of all the world,
> Now at full age, fulness of time, thy season,
> When Prophecies of thee are best fulfill'd. (IV, 374–81)

Next, Satan, still in his first speech, pretends to read in the heavens signs which forecast a hard lot for Christ. By implying that God, the ruler of the heavens, is responsible for these signs, he is preparing for his later argument that they represent God's admonition to Christ to take David's throne now. At this time he also prepares for another important point in his argument, which he will persuasively urge later, as he notes that he can find no date set by the stars for Christ's

[21]Galatians iv.4 speaks of God sending the Son "when the fulness of the time was come." Christ's own awareness of his maturing is made clear in *Paradise Regained*, I, 286–7. See also III, 31 ff. for Satan's reminder to Christ in a previous incident of the prophecy and of his maturity. In the previous incident, Satan's strategy of temptation was to needle Christ for his laggardliness, as insinuated by Satan.

accession to the throne. Later he will argue that the portents are designating the present time as the proper one:

> Now contrary, if I read aught in Heaven,
> Or Heav'n write aught of Fate, by what the Stars
> Voluminous, or single characters,
> In their conjunctions met, give me to spell,
> Sorrows, and labours, opposition, hate,
> Attends thee, scorns, reproaches, injuries,
> Violence and stripes, and lastly cruel death.
> A Kingdom they portend thee, but what Kingdom,
> Real or Allegoric I discern not,
> Nor when, eternal sure, as without end,
> Without beginning; for no date prefixt
> Directs me in the Starry Rubric set. (IV, 382–93)

Now the next step for Satan is to produce the hardships through ugly dreams and the fierce tempest, not primarily to terrify Christ but to verify his own predictions and prove his own validity as an interpreter of heavenly signs. Christ will be more ready to listen to his further interpretations of portents, he expects, after the remarkable coming of the storm and the dreams, which in turn will serve as the portents for his next step. He takes especial pains to lead Christ to think that these prodigies are signs from God and that the responsibility for this night of hardships is God's; first, he makes a great ado about his own departure ("feigning to disappear"); and when he returns in the morning, he pointedly declares his own absence during the night (IV, 452–4). Of course it was not he who caused all this trouble, although it was no more than he had expected. Ordinarily such storms, says Satan, are harmless and soon gone, but sometimes they

> oft fore-signify and threaten ill:
> This Tempest at this Desert most was bent;
> Of men at thee, for only thou here dwell'st. (IV, 464–6)

This particular storm, therefore, calls for special interpretation, since it justifies what he has foretold:

> Did I not tell thee, if thou didst reject
> The perfect season offer'd with my aid
> To win thy destin'd seat, but wilt prolong
> All to the push of Fate, pursue thy way
> Of gaining David's Throne no man knows when. . . . (IV, 467–71)

Satan now argues cogently and persuasively his point that although the angels prophecied Christ's accession to David's throne, they did not reveal the time; hence, these turbulencies of the heavens and these

dreams are portents revealing the appointed time; and God is admonishing Christ to assume his proper responsibilities:

> Thou shalt be what thou art ordain'd, no doubt;
> For angels have proclaim'd it, but concealing
> The time and means: each act is rightliest done,
> Not when it must, but when it may be best.
> If thou observe not this, be sure to find,
> What I foretold thee, many a hard assay
> Of dangers, and adversities and pains,
> Ere thou of Israel's Scepter get fast hold;
> Whereof this ominous night that clos'd thee round,
> So many terrors, voices, prodigies
> May warn thee, as a sure fore-going sign. (IV, 473–83)

Thus, in the storm episode, although Christ, in his human status, might be vulnerable to the human emotion of fear of the storm and the dreams, there is much more involved than just physical terror and violence. Satan has devised his strategy not so much to frighten Christ with the turbulent elements as to deceive him with those elements by pretending to read Divine portents in them and so to trick him into misinterpreting them as a prodigy in nature revealing God's wrath at the Son's failure to fulfil prophecy, to accept his bounden duty, and to ascend David's throne, now so close at hand through Satan's aid.

But Christ is not deceived by these false portents. Since he is able to distinguish the false from the true, he sees specifically and precisely what Satan is up to. He rejects Satan's interpretations, explanations, and insinuations by condemning all these "terrors, voices, prodigies," as "false portents not sent from God but thee," and sharply spurns Satan's "offer'd aid." He, therefore, again has proved himself worthy in a trial which is by no means easy, one whose pitfalls Milton's contemporaries would have understood well. In the first temptation Christ perceived the falsity in Satan's claim to have used oracles for man's benefit; now his perception and steadfastness in regard to the false portents of the storm can be seen as the result of long and solid grounding in reason and trust in God, not on extemporaneously contrived defence.

Satan's objective in the storm scene is thus seen to be the same as in the previous incidents of the second temptation: to lead Christ into taking possession of power or kingdom under improper circumstances and auspices. There is no change in the thematic current. The episode is not an interlude, or a link or prologue to the third temptation. The night is not a signal of the end of the second temptation; it is an implementing agent in the stratagem of Satan to achieve his aims within the scope of this group of incidents. Satan himself shows

later that he is coming to the end of this series of temptations when he says:

> And opportunity I here have had
> To try thee, sift thee, and confess have found thee
> Proof against all temptation as a rock
> Of Adamant, and as a centre, firm
> To the utmost of mere man both wise and good,
> No more.... (IV, 531–6)

Satan, without intending to flatter, is absolutely correct in Milton's view. Throughout the second temptation Christ has shown the great moral strength and intellectual perception possible for any man who exercises his God-given reason; but Christ has not shown the proof of Divinity (at least, as Satan misconceives Divinity) which Satan has been striving to discover throughout the poem.[22] Satan must go on further, and he signals the closing of the second temptation and the beginning of a new one when he says, "Another method I must now begin" (IV, 540). The third temptation follows immediately.

The new objective on the pinnacle is not to lure Christ into improper kingship but to educe an unappointed miracle on Satan's terms, which would certify Christ's Divinity and thus ruin God's plan for the Son's trial and triumph on a human level. The method which Satan uses on the pinnacle is much too subtle and complex to be described as sheer violence, as it usually is.[23] Hence, there is no connection between the storm scene and the pinnacle scene through violence. Throughout the poem, Milton, in the increasingly severe conflict between Christ and Satan, was effectively building up the tension towards the pinnacle scene, the climatic incident in which the Son was to triumph so gloriously and spectacularly. An interlude immediately preceding, or a softening prologue, based on crude terror, would allow the tension to fall and the sense of the fierceness of the conflict to weaken. On the other hand, a positive and trying temptation such as that of false portents—which would have been so meaningful in Milton's time—keeps the tension mounting towards the climax and heightens its artistic, as well as its moral, effect.

III

Previous interpretations of the storm scene have been based with good reason upon certain passages, at the beginning of the episode,

[22]Dr. Pope, in *Paradise Regained*, chap. III, has discussed the question of Christ's identity in the working of the poem.

[23]See the present author's "Grace as a Means of Poetry: Milton's Pattern for Salvation," *Tulane Studies in English*, IV (1954), 57–90, for an analysis of the pinnacle scene proposing against a method of violence by Satan.

which describe Satan as desperate and enraged and which point to his use of violence to terrorize Christ. There are, however, contradictions to these passages in the text itself, as well as in the actual treatment, as I have just described it. At the conclusion of the episode of learning, Satan is described as "now / Quite at a loss, for all his darts were spent" (IV, 365–6); but contradictorily a few lines later occurs the passage:

> So saying he took (*for still he knew his power*
> *Not yet expir'd*) and to the wilderness
> Brought back the Son of God. . . . (IV, 394–6)

Then he causes the storm "to tempt the Son of God with terrors dire." Here is the terror motive all right, but there is no despair and certainly all of Satan's darts are not spent, nor his "power . . . expir'd," for the storm is a fierce one—and also he has the power to bring horrible dreams to Christ. The next morning he comes to Christ

> Yet with no new device, they all were spent;
> Rather by this his last affront resolv'd,
> Desperate of better course, to vent his rage,
> And mad despite to be so oft repell'd. (IV, 443–6)

When he finds Christ so much at ease he is "swoln with rage" (IV, 499). But his rage does not hinder him from skilfully continuing the effective new stratagem which he has started the day before.

Actually the rage and despair in these passages are not so significant as might appear, for throughout the poem up to the storm episode, it has been Milton's consistent practice to describe Satan, almost incident by incident, as at a loss, or confounded, or speechless, at the failure of each stratagem, but nevertheless quickly producing another still more forceful. Rage and despair are the first emotions which he ascribes to Satan and they are notable—particularly despair—from then on. In the opening lines of the poem, Satan, as a witness of the baptism scene,

> a while survey'd
> With wonder, then with envy fraught and rage
> Flies to his place . . .

Summoning his council

> With looks aghast and sad he thus bespake. (I, 37–43)

After the first unsuccessful temptation, Satan returns to his council and

> without sign of boast, or sign of joy
> Solicitous and blank he thus began. (II, 119–20)

He concludes his report on a note of profound insecurity:

> Therefore I am return'd, lest confidence
> Of my success with Eve in Paradise
> Deceive ye to persuasion over-sure
> Of like succeeding here; I summon all
> Rather to be in readiness with hand
> Or counsel to assist; lest I who erst
> Thought none my equal, now be over-match'd.
> So spake the old Serpent, doubting. . . . (II, 140–7)

Nothing reveals Satan's real uneasiness here more than his genuine readiness, in contrast to his practice in *Paradise Lost*, to invite participation and share credit with his followers. At the conclusion of the banquet scene Satan answers "malcontent" (II, 392); and at Christ's refusal of wealth, he stands

> A while as mute counfounded what to say,
> What to reply, confuted and convinc't
> Of his weak arguing and fallacious drift. . . . (III, 2–4)

But, characteristically, he

> At length collecting all his Serpent wiles,
> With soothing words renew'd, him [Christ] thus accosts.
> (III, 5–6)

To Christ's rejection of glory

> here again
> Satan had not to answer, but stood struck
> With guilt of his own sin, for he himself
> Insatiable of glory had lost all,
> Yet of another Plea bethought him soon. (III, 145–9)

After his first offer of the throne of David has failed, Satan replies "inly rackt" (III, 203) but, increasing the force of his attack, offers Parthia; and after this offer has also failed

> Perplex'd and troubl'd at his bad success
> The Tempter stood, nor had what to reply,
> Discover'd in his fraud, thrown from his hope,
> So oft, and the persuasive Rhetoric
> That sleek't his tongue and won so much from Eve,
> So little here, nay lost. . . . (IV, 1–6)

He then proceeds to a still more powerful lure, the Roman Empire itself. This refused, "impudent" he speedily holds out the "kingdoms of the world." At Christ's sharp refusal he is "with fear abasht," yet none the less he immediately and energetically makes the offer of learning. So far in the poem, then, up to the storm scene, Satan has exhibited at times rage and disappointment, and consistently despair and loss but has always "of another Plea bethought him soon."

Although this method of treatment is consistent, it does involve a considerable discrepancy; for the descriptions which follow so many incidents of a Satan confounded are invariably followed by descriptions of a Satan energetically pursuing new, forceful stratagems immediately. That Milton himself noticed such a discrepancy and endeavoured to correct it is suggested by the epic simile at the beginning of Book IV, after Christ's rejection of the offer of learning.

> But as a man who had been matchless held
> In cunning, over-reach't where least he thought,
> To salve his credit, and for very spite
> Still will be tempting him who foils him still,
> And never cease, though to his shame the more;
> Or as a swarm of flies in vintage time,
> About the wine-press where sweet must is poured,
> Beat off, returns as oft with humming sound;
> Or surging waves against a solid rock,
> Though all to shivers dash't, the assault renew,
> Vain batt'ry, and in froth or bubbles end;
> So Satan, whom repulse upon repulse
> Met ever, and to shameful silence brought,
> Yet gives not o'er though desperate of success,
> And his vain importunity pursues. (IV, 10–24)

Thus it seems to me that during the course of composition Milton may have altered his original conception for the treatment of Satan. He apparently intended, in order to emphasize the unshakeable strength of the Son, to portray Satan as wholly ineffective before it, and hence as despairing and at a loss after each encounter. In this treatment, he would emphasize the contrast between Christ and Eve. He would show the futility of evil against true goodness and the folly of a struggle, such as Satan's, against God's order. In accordance with this concept, he started out to describe Satan as in despair after the failure of his successive attempts. As composition progressed, however, Milton found himself creating a much more dramatic conflict than he had at first imagined. He saw more and more possibilities of temptations against which Christ could show his strength and perception; but for the temptations to be valid and forceful, he also had to describe a Satan who displays resourcefulness and energy in devising them and in attacking Christ with them. Thus Satan appears adroit and pressing in the actual assault, in spite of the sense of loss and despair which are ascribed to him. It is significant, however, that after the storm scene there are no descriptions of Satan as being at a loss. He quickly and decisively carries Christ to the pinnacle and with a scornfully confident manner taunts Christ to stand; and when his

stratagem fails as Christ stands by God's miracle, he is surprised.

Thus the passages in the storm scene which indicate Satan's mood of futility, his lack of darts and devices, even his rage, are not peculiar to this scene: they represent a method of description which Milton has consistently employed from the first; and here, as each time before, Satan produces a new and forceful stratagem. However, it might be argued that in the storm scene the expressions are more explicit than in preceding incidents and need further explanation, particularly in view of the elements of violence and terror, which seem to be related to them in context, and which have yet to be explained.

I should like to suggest that Milton, either during the course of composition or afterwards, may have altered his original treatment of the storm episode from a trial of violence in order to terrorize to one of false portents. He may have originally designed the incident as a nocturnal interlude at the conclusion of the second temptation, or as a prologue to the third temptation, with violence as the method to be used by Satan. Or he may have originally designed the incident to be somewhat like that in *Paradise Lost*, in which Satan attacks Eve's mind during the night with an evil dream so that its venom might work for the final assault at the tree. That terror was originally among the experiences which he intended Christ to undergo is clearly evidenced by a passage in Book I, wherein the angels sing that God ventured his Son.

> Though untried
> Against what'er may tempt, what'er seduce
> Allure, or terrify, or undermine. (I, 177–9)

In the final version of the work, however, no incident, not even the storm scene, depends upon terror. The conflicting passages in question here indicate that Milton may have at first intended that this scene should serve as the trial by violence and terror and that Satan should be motivated by enraged despair. But he realized that in terms of the dramatic conflict between Christ and Satan, with its tension rising towards the pinnacle scene, an incident so conceived would weaken the tension rather than continue heightening it. The despair and rage of Satan would be inappropriate; the artistic situation demanded a stronger and more meaningful temptation. Meanwhile, in the course of composition, the excitement, controversies, and emotional instability over prodigies and portents, rising to such a pitch in 1666, caught his imagination, which was peculiarly responsive because of his own long concern with the problem of true and false prophecy and revelation; and he came to feel that in this age-old and universal problem, so immediately conspicuous in England, there would be a powerful and

subtle temptation which he could have Satan put before Christ, the temptation, faced by so many of his own contemporaries, to misinterpret the stars, prodigies in nature, and dreams, and therefrom to act unwisely. Hence, he decided to make use of this more positive and meaningful form of temptation, in place of mere violence to terrorize.

If Milton did decide to change his treatment of the storm scene, he would have found it no wrench thematically or structurally to fit his new version easily and effectively into the fabric of his poem. The storm which he had designed was ready for his use as a striking prodigy, and so were the dreams. In his rich and detailed treatment of prophecy and revelation he had already laid the groundwork for his new plan; and also, he had already attributed to Satan, in the first temptation, the practice of using false portents, signs and the like, as Satan boasts (I, 393–96). Hence, in the storm scene Satan's resort to portents would not have to be construed as a last desperate move. It is noteworthy, however, that Christ's sharply castigating reply to Satan's claims (I, 407 ff.) is concerned only with Satan's ambiguous and misleading oracles and passes completely over the dreams, portents, and signs. Thus it seems clear that from the first Milton had intended Satan, the Father of Falsehood, to be known as a practitioner of deception by oracles and portents, but the focus of Christ's reply suggests that he had not realized in the early stages of composition their possibilities, in their full breadth, as an individual temptation. The contemporary excitement over portents may have pointed him the way, may, in fact, have subtly coloured his treatment of prophecy and revelation all through the poem, even before he decided to have Satan use false portents as a temptation. It may have been significant to Milton that much of the excitement and turmoil about portents had arisen over the recall of Charles to the throne, with the signal issues of properly authorized and properly conducted power or rule attendant upon this recall. Thus, he would have seen that the episode of false portents could be worked quite fittingly and meaningfully into the second temptation, which concerned kingship and the proper occupancy and direction of a throne. But in his revision he did not remove all traces of his former conception of violence and terror. He may have intentionally left some element of terror in the new treatment, as an inherent part of a temptation involving portents, since he had seen his contemporaries terrified by them. He thus intended to remove the element of terror caused by sheer violence but to leave the element of terror caused by portents. But in making his revisions according to this intent, he still did not completely eradicate traces of the original method of terror caused by violence.

SAMSON'S MIDDLE: ARISTOTLE AND DR. JOHNSON

M. E. GRENANDER

ALL [Milton's] originality," wrote Professor A. S. P. Woodhouse recently, "—and it is great—is revealed in his adaptation of traditional poetic forms, never in wilful departure from them. . . ."[1] Yet the student who assumes that *Samson Agonistes* is a classical tragedy, and attempts to follow the suggestion made by William Riley Parker and F. Michael Krouse[2] that it be studied in the light of Aristotle's *Poetics*, cracks his head immediately against the stone wall of Samuel Johnson's resounding dictum, that while it has a beginning and an end which Aristotle himself would have approved, *Samson* has no middle. Since Johnson's time, a host of critics have ranged themselves on one side or the other of the argument concerning *Samson*'s allegedly absent middle. Krouse added to the controversy an illuminating survey of seventeenth-century and earlier conceptions of the biblical story. Parker's special contribution was to measure Milton's play against classical Greek tragedies. Both, however, suggested the possibility of further analysis in terms of the *Poetics*.

The whole dispute, whose bibliography alone runs to a couple of pages, and which is too familiar to Milton scholars to rehearse here, centres around Aristotle's well-known doctrine that tragedy is primarily an imitation of an action, and that the action should have a beginning, middle, and end. Johnson, thundering against *Samson Agonistes* as "the tragedy which ignorance has admired, and bigotry applauded," denounced it as having no middle, since "the intermediate parts have neither cause nor consequence, neither hasten nor retard the catastrophe." "Nothing passes between the first act and the last, that either hastens or delays the death of Samson. The whole drama, if its superfluities were cut off, would scarcely fill a single act."[3]

These are strong strictures, indeed, and critics since Johnson's time have been violent in agreeing or disagreeing with them. The Johnsonian view, in general, has been upheld by Tupper and Knowlton; it has been attacked by Cumberland, Percival, Baum, Jebb, and Krouse.

[1] A. S. P. Woodhouse, "Pattern in *Paradise Lost*," *University of Toronto Quarterly*, XXII (1953), 114. See also the same writer's "*Samson Agonistes* and Milton's Experience," *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, XLIII (1949), 174–5; throughout this paper, Woodhouse treats *Samson* as a classical tragedy.

[2] W. R. Parker, *Milton's Debt to Greek Tragedy in Samson Agonistes* (Baltimore, 1937), vii; F. M. Krouse, *Milton's Samson and the Christian Tradition* (Princeton, 1949), 131.

[3] *The Rambler*, no. 139; *The Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets* (London, 1790), I, 249.

None of these critics, however, has studied the problem in the light of the *Poetics*, though both Parker and Krouse, as indicated above, pointed out the value such a study would have. Hence this paper will undertake an examination of certain Aristotelian criteria applicable to *Samson Agonistes* in an effort to justify Milton's plot against Johnson's charges and to introduce some new concepts to the discussion of its structure.

I

It is my contention that, from an Aristotelian point of view, *Samson Agonistes* has a true beginning, middle, and end; and that all the incidents and episodes are related by necessity and/or probability, on the level either of plot or of character. To implement this view, certain passages from the *Poetics* need to be scrutinized with some care, since they illuminate those aspects of *Samson*'s plot which Johnson criticized.

The passage Johnson had in mind is, of course, the famous one (*Poetics*, 7) where Aristotle says:

> . . . a tragedy is an imitation of an action that is complete in itself, as a whole of some magnitude. . . . Now a whole is that which has beginning, middle, and end. A beginning is that which is not itself necessarily after anything else, and which has naturally something else after it; an end is that which is naturally after something itself, either as its necessary or usual consequent, and with nothing else after it; and a middle, that which is by nature after one thing and has also another after it.[4]

Another relevant passage follows in the next paragraph:

> In poetry the story, as an imitation of action, must represent one action, a complete whole, with its several incidents so closely connected that the transposal or withdrawal of any one of them will disjoin and dislocate the whole. For that which makes no perceptible difference by its presence or absence is no real part of the whole.

When we turn to the *Samson* controversy, we find that both Johnson and the critics who succeeded him, whether they attacked or defended Milton's play, regarded the terms beginning, middle, and end as being applicable to the representation of the plot rather than to the action imitated. But according to Aristotle, the two need not coincide. He says (*Poetics*, 18) that incidents before the opening scene may constitute a part of the beginning or middle, and, in the case of Milton's play, I think they do.

This point is the crux of my defence of *Samson Agonistes* in terms of Aristotelian criteria, and it needs to be underlined. Throughout

[4]Trans. Ingram Bywater, in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. Richard McKeon (New York, 1941). All subsequent references to the *Poetics* are to this edition.

Aristotle makes a distinction between the "imitation" of an action and the action itself. Tragedy is a "mode of imitation," "the imitation of an *action* [italics mine] that is serious and also, as having magnitude, complete in itself"; "the subject represented . . . is an action"; "the action (that which was done) is represented in the play by the Fable or Plot"; "Tragedy is essentially an imitation not of persons but of action and life"; "in poetry the story, as an imitation of action, must represent one action"; "Plots are either simple or complex, since the actions they represent are naturally of this twofold description." In discussing Complication and Dénouement, he says that "incidents before the opening scene, and often certain also of those within the play, [form] the Complication," by which he means "all from the *beginning of the story* [italics mine] to the point just before the change in the hero's fortunes." (*Poetics*, 1, 6, 8, 10, 18.) A very significant statement of Aristotle's in this connection is made in his discussion of the magnitude of plot: "As for the limit of its length, so far as that is relative to public performances and spectators, it does not fall within the theory of poetry" (*Poetics*, 7). In other words, he is here distinguishing between mere *length* (which would refer to the representation or imitation) and *magnitude* (which refers to the action imitated). Certain of his comments, indeed, can be readily applied to the kind of relation existing between representation and action in *Samson Agonistes*. Aristotle says, "The Plot in fact should be so framed that, even without seeing the things take place, he who simply hears the account of them shall be filled with horror and pity at the incidents"; and, referring specifically to the use of traditional stories (and the narrative of Samson was one, as Krouse has pointed out): "there is something left to the poet himself; it is for him to devise the right way of treating them." The protagonist may do the deed of horror "in ignorance of his relationship, and discover that afterwards, as does the Oedipus in Sophocles. Here the deed is outside the play . . ." (*Poetics*, 14). There is a strong parallel here between *Oedipus Rex* and *Samson Agonistes* so far as the relation between action and representation is concerned. In both plays, a great deal of what must be considered action (and hence plot) takes place "outside the play." (As a matter of fact, Dr. Tillyard has pointed out the similarity between *Samson* and *Oedipus at Colonus*.[5]) I am trying to indicate that *Samson Agonistes* deserves the same treatment here that Aristotle granted *Oedipus*—in other words, that Milton understood the *Poetics*, at least on this point, better than did Dr. Johnson.

[5]E. M. W. Tillyard, "Milton and the Classics," *Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature of the United Kingdom*, New Series, XXVI (1953), 70.

Parker has recognized the plot problem involved, but attempts to solve it by referring it to "exposition." However, before any solution can be reached, two questions need to be answered: (1) What ordering principle unifies the play? and (2) With this principle as a criterion, at what point is there a given something which has no antecedents, but from which logical consequences may follow?

II

Samson Agonistes is a tragedy with a multilinear plot whose unity derives from the ratio which is set up among four sets of relations: those between Dagon and the Philistines, Samson and the Philistines, Samson and God, and God and Dagon. Different critics have emphasized different aspects of this plot. Hughes, for example, sees the situation as "ultimately a struggle between God and Dagon." Jebb says "the central idea of Milton's poem, is the idea of a national champion, first victorious, then abased, then finally triumphant in a national cause. . . . The issue of the drama [is that] Jehovah has prevailed over Dagon; Israel is avenged on Philistia." Parker, who attacks Jebb's point of view, emphasizes the relationship between Samson and God, and makes of the drama primarily a psychological study of the hero, which I would agree is extremely important. But he goes so far as to say that "we care little about the 'national cause' of Israel, and less about Dagon and the Philistines. . . . Race and nation are incidental; we are primarily interested in Samson as a man. . . . He is a Hebrew only by accident, [and] . . . God . . . is more than Jebb's 'Jehovah'—more than a tribal deity whose honour is threatened by Dagon."[6] Surely, however, no view of *Samson Agonistes* is complete which does not recognize the significance of *all four* of these sets of relations. Moreover, they do not begin when Samson is overthrown, blind, and in captivity, since those circumstances are the logical result of antecedent action, but at a point much further back, when Samson, the chosen agent of God, is at the height of his happiness.[7]

In order to clarify these statements, an explanation of what I conceive to be an outline of the plot of *Samson Agonistes* is in order. On

[6]Merritt Y. Hughes, ed., *Paradise Regained, the Minor Poems and Samson Agonistes* (New York, 1937), 431; Sir Richard Jebb, "*Samson Agonistes* and the Hellenic Drama," *Proceedings of the British Academy*, III (1907–8), 346, 344; W. R. Parker, "The Greek Spirit in Milton's *Samson Agonistes*," *Essays and Studies by Members of the English Association*, XX (1934), 38, 39.

[7]Cf. A. S. P. Woodhouse ("Milton's Experience," 161, 170), who states that the "central theme" of *Samson* turns on "temptation, disobedience, repentance, obedience, restoration." My paper explores the implications, in terms of Aristotelian principles of plot development, of this view.

the surface, the plot seems as meagre as Dr. Johnson said it was: Samson, overthrown by the Philistines, eventually destroys his captors. I believe, however, that the plot is essentially a rich one, and that an understanding of the way in which the four relations indicated above are interwoven is essential to an aesthetic evaluation of the play, since all the incidents are causally motivated in terms of one or more of these relations, and to overlook any of them is to fail to appreciate the structure of the plot.

The relation between Dagon and the Philistines is the simplest, since it does not change. The fish-god is represented by the Philistines (and more especially, Harapha) throughout the play. The relation between Samson and the Philistines is more complicated, but still obvious. At the beginning of the action (as distinct from the opening scene) Samson is victorious over the Philistines; then he is conquered by them; and at the end he triumphs once again.

The relation between Samson and God is a complicated and subtle one, and the most important in the play, since Samson's tragedy is his loss of special favour, and his ultimate triumph is his restoration to divine grace. At the beginning, Samson enjoys God's favour and acts as God's agent. Then he betrays God by telling the secret of his strength to Dalila, and loses God's favour. Next, he reaches the stage where he shows himself worthy to be chosen by God once again (first in the Manoa incident, where he evinces a desire to expiate his crime; then in the Dalila incident, where he remains firm against her blandishments). Fourth, he hopes once again to act as God's agent (when he challenges Harapha); and, at the end, God does choose him to act in the final scene at the Philistine theatre.

The relation between God and Dagon is a changing one, and parallels the conflict between Samson and the Philistines, elevating the plot to a level far above that of a merely human contest. God is first supreme; then Dagon (as we learn from the Manoa incident); and finally, God again, with the destruction of Dagon's worshippers.

With this preface, I shall now turn to a detailed analysis of the incidents and episodes of the tragedy, explaining them in the light of the ideas indicated above.

III

Milton was dealing with a story whose main outlines were as familiar to his readers as those of the Greek tragedies were to Athenian audiences. Hence Samson's lofty position at the beginning of the action is well known: he is the Hebrew hero who has been exalted by Jehovah to be the glory of Israel and the scourge of Philistia. Moreover, this

position is described repeatedly and explicitly in the play: by Samson himself (ll. 522–31; 633–40; 1192–1219); by the Chorus (ll. 124–50); by Manoa (ll. 340–54); and by Harapha (ll. 1082–90; 1093–1103; 1182–91). There is no antecedent to this situation. Samson has triumphed over the Philistines; he enjoys God's favour (his feats of physical prowess are symbols of divine support); and God—through his champion—is victorious over Dagon. Furthermore, Samson is established as an Aristotelian tragic hero (*Poetics*, 13)—a great man whom we can admire, and who has some maximum fortune to begin with. He is neither pre-eminently good (in l. 173 the Chorus hints that virtue was not a mate to his strength) nor wise (indicated in ll. 52–6, 202–9, and 369). Consequently he is the type of man over whose misfortunes the audience will feel fear. If the beginning of the play were taken to be Samson eyeless in Gaza, his change would be from misery to triumph, and the play would either not be a tragedy at all, or at best a very inferior one (see *Poetics*, 13). The fact that Parker places the beginning of the play here is a major limitation in his otherwise admirable analysis of Samson's psychological development.[8]

Once Samson's pre-eminent position is established as the beginning of the play, the next incident is his marriage to Dalila. His marriage is not causally related to the beginning, but it is probable, since we are told (ll. 219–33) he married his first wife (like Dalila, a Philistine) because of an "intimate impulse" from God in order to afford occasion for Israel's deliverance. When she proved faithless, it is probable that he should marry another Philistine woman because he conceives a second marriage to be "lawful from [his] former act, And the same end, . . . to oppress Israel's oppressors" (ll. 231–3). Moreover, his marriage is necessary to the incident which follows, since his betrayal is dependent upon it.

Dalila's wresting the secret of Samson's strength from him and betraying it to the Philistines is both necessary and probable. Samson's downfall and ultimate triumph could not be achieved without it, and it could be neither omitted nor transposed without changing the structure of the entire plot. It furnishes the impetus which alters two relations: that between Samson and the Philistines; and, more important, that between Samson and God. Samson has "divulged the secret gift of God To a deceitful woman"; consequently, he loses divine favour. The incident is probable, judged on the basis of the characters of both Dalila and Samson. Dalila is a woman; she is

[8] "Greek Spirit," 42; "The Date of *Samson Agonistes*," *Philological Quarterly*, XXVIII (1949), 162.

Samson's wife; she is a Philistine and a worshipper of Dagon. These facts are the basis for the reasons she cogently presents for wanting to know her husband's secret. She had a natural feminine curiosity; in her jealous love, she hoped to bind Samson closer to her by possessing the key to his strength, and she was assured that the Philistines intended only to deprive Samson of his liberty, thereby keeping him at home with her; and finally, motives of patriotism and religion prompted her to betray her husband. These are all good reasons: the fact that Samson scoffs at them does not detract from the potency of their effect on his wife, nor from their reasonableness to the audience. Further, it is probable (in terms of Samson's character) that he would have succumbed to Dalila's wiles, for there are references throughout the play to his susceptibility to feminine blandishments (ll. 198–202; 233–6; 406–19; 532–40; 558–64; 778–89); and he had told the secret of his riddle to his first wife.

Samson's capture and blinding by the Philistines is the necessary and probable outcome of his betrayal of his secret to Dalila. This incident could be neither transposed nor omitted. It is necessary for Samson to reach a state where he cares so little for life that he is willing to sacrifice it in order to bring destruction to the leaders of Philistia.[9] Furthermore, he must have some outward and recognizable sign of his fall from God's favour. The relations between Samson and the Philistines and Samson and God are now completely altered. The incident is also probable. In the light of what we know about Samson's activities against the Philistines, it is highly credible that they would put a stop to his depredations if they could. Dalila gives them the power; they use it.

This brings us to the opening scene of the play, which is well into the middle of the action—not the beginning, as the critics have assumed.[10] Samson, fettered, blind, and alone, while he rests outside the prison at Gaza compares his past glories with his present ignominy. That he has not achieved true humility is indicated by the fact that twice (although in both instances he recalls himself) he questions the

[9]Cf. Jebb, "*Samson Agonistes*," 342.

[10]It has been customary even for those critics who disagreed with Johnson to divide the drama into five acts, usually I—Samson alone and with the Chorus; II—Samson and Manoa; III—Samson and Dalila; IV—Samson and Harapha; and V—Samson and the Philistines. (See Hughes, *Paradise Regained*, etc., 435; Jebb, "*Samson Agonistes*," 341; and Parker, *Milton's Debt to Greek Tragedy in Samson Agonistes*, 60–1.) In this connection, however, it is interesting to note Krouse's statement (*Milton's Samson*, 84) that "Salianus spoke of Samson's realization, upon awaking in the arms of Dalila, that he was bereft of his divine strength, as the 'peripetia luctuosae tragoediae,' the reversal of sorrowful tragedy, occurring *in the fourth act of Samson's play upon the stage of life*. [Italics mine.] Then he added: 'Nam quintus catastrophem, mortemque Samsonis continet.' "

purposes of Providence. As he goes on to bemoan his blindness, pity is aroused in the audience because of his physical suffering, that of a man who is like themselves, whose misery is out of all proportion to the error in judgment—trust in his wife—which caused it (see *Poetics*, 13).

The episode of the visit of the Chorus, which comes next, does not have a necessary sequential connection with what preceded, and was attacked by Johnson in these terms: ". . . at the conclusion of the first act there is no design laid, no discovery made, nor any disposition formed towards the subsequent event." But this episode is properly subordinated on a qualitative level, and it is artistically probable. Samson has a holiday; what more natural than that his friends should come to visit him? The function of this episode is to give us some of the details of Samson's past life which constituted the beginning of the action, and thus to contrast his past state with his present; to illuminate his character; and to develop the spiritual nature of his suffering, making explicit that his external blindness is a symbol of something worse, the internal blindness of his soul (ll. 155–63):

> Thou art become (O worst imprisonment!)
> The dungeon of thyself; thy soul
> (Which men enjoying sight oft without cause complain)
> Imprisoned now indeed,
> In real darkness of the body dwells,
> Shut up from outward light
> To incorporate with gloomy night;
> For inward light, alas!
> Puts forth no visual beam.

As Samson's tragedy deepens from a merely physical suffering to mental and spiritual anguish, pity for him is proportionately increased.

The functions indicated, since they contribute to an understanding of the play as a whole, properly come near the beginning of the representation of the action. The chasm between Samson and God continues, for Samson, in talking with the Chorus, for the third time "taxes divine disposal" in giving him such a disproportionately mean share of wisdom to go with his "immeasurable strength." The Chorus gently rebukes him. In ll. 291–2, he questions God's neglect of him for a fourth time; the Chorus, in a defence of God's ways, again admonishes him. There is no likelihood that Samson will be restored to God's favour until he frankly faces the fact of his own guilt as the cause of his misfortunes. Since this episode is the last one in which Samson upbraids God for his misfortunes, it could not be transposed without upsetting the structure of the plot.

The next incident, Samson's conversation with Manoa, was strongly attacked by Dr. Johnson: "[The first] part of the dialogue, as it might tend to animate or exasperate *Samson*, cannot, I think, be censured as wholly superfluous; but the succeeding dispute, in which *Samson* contends to die, and which his father breaks off, that he may go to solicit his release, is only valuable for its own beauties, and has no tendency to introduce anything that follows it." But Manoa's visit is both probable and necessary, for it has a structural connection in the sequence of the plot. It is the first of a series of incidents which are of fundamental importance in restoring the relation between Samson and God. Samson must cease to blame God for his woes and take the fault upon himself. The first inkling that he will do this comes with Manoa's visit. Manoa charges God with having given him a son "glorious for a while," who was only to be subjected to "foul indignities." Samson, however, says (ll. 373–6):

> Appoint not heavenly disposition, father.
> Nothing of all these evils hath befall'n me
> But justly; I myself have brought them on;
> Sole author I, sole cause. . . .

Samson is beginning to show a proper humility—a necessary condition before he can be restored to God's favour. Having done this, he must demonstrate that he is willing to expiate his crime of "shameful garrulity," and that he can withstand temptation if given another chance.

When Manoa tells Samson of his ransom plan, Samson is not tempted by the proffer of creature comforts; he feels that he must remain in the prison at Gaza to pay the consequences for having published "God's . . . holy secret." At this point Samson again blames himself, and not God, for his plight. Life holds no more charm for him. He prefers having his wretched existence cut short by the miseries of prison life to living to "a contemptible old age obscure," sitting "idle on the household hearth." Manoa then hints that God may restore Samson's sight and strength. Samson, however, has forebodings of early death.

The Manoa incident advances to a considerable extent the relation between Samson and God. But it also introduces another element: the relation between God and Dagon. Manoa tells his son the feast at Gaza will glorify Dagon above God because of Samson's delivery into the hands of the Philistines. The conflict is thus raised from the level of a human one between Samson and the Philistines to a personal contest between God and Dagon, and the enormity of the consequences of Samson's crime is made manifest. To Samson, the abasement of

God is his "chief affliction." However, he seeks relief in the thought that God will soon assert himself to overthrow Dagon. As yet, neither Samson nor Manoa has any thought that Samson himself will be God's chosen instrument to triumph over both Dagon and the Philistines.

As Manoa leaves, Samson in a long speech (ll. 606–51) tells of his mental torments at the thought that he, the chosen of God, has been deserted by Heaven; his only desire now is for speedy death. The Chorus, for the first time, instead of defending God, itself charges him with his reversal of attitude towards Samson. Samson, at this juncture, is undergoing his most extreme suffering—a deep mental anguish over the thought that God has deserted him. This internal suffering is the Tragic Incident (i.e., Pathos), and not Samson's capture or blinding or his death accompanied by that of the Philistine leaders. Both Samson and the Chorus are persuaded that God has left him, alone and an outcast from Heaven's favour, to be persecuted by his enemies. Pity is at its height, and from this point on is maintained at an intense level until the catharsis of the final scene.

The next two incidents, the visits of Dalila and Harapha, have been attacked by both Johnson and Gilbert as having no structural relationship to the plot.[11] But both incidents are necessary steps in its development. Dalila's entrance has a necessary causal relationship with what has preceded, for plot can be understood only in terms of character, and the developments in Samson's character which occurred in the Manoa incident were necessary before he could withstand Dalila's blandishments. Whether they are sincere or not—a question which critics have much debated—is beside the point; had he succumbed to them, Samson could not have been chosen as God's agent to overthrow Dagon and the Philistines.[12] Dalila's overtures represent the second temptation which is held out to Samson. In addition to the domestic comforts which Manoa had offered, Dalila's plan holds the allure of conjugal love and affection—an allure to which Samson had previously shown himself only too susceptible. But his moral fibre has been stiffened, and he comes through this trial the victor; Dalila,

[11]Allan H. Gilbert, "Is *Samson Agonistes* Unfinished?" *Philological Quarterly*, XXVIII (1949), 100–2.

[12]Krouse (*Milton's Samson*, 102) makes a good argument for the case that Milton's seventeenth-century readers, on the basis of their knowledge of the Samson tradition, would readily have recognized Dalila's arguments as specious and deceitful. But, as Woodhouse ("Milton's Experience," 165) points out: "Too exclusive attention has perhaps been paid to the bitter comments of Samson and the harsh doctrine of the Chorus. . . . The primary function of the scene is to demonstrate by [Dalila's] powerlessness to reassert her sway the completeness of Samson's repentance."

scorned by her husband, flounces away breathing defiance. The severity of the temptation is indicated by the calm words of the Chorus after Dalila has left (ll. 1003–7):

> Yet beauty, though injurious, hath strange power,
> After offence returning, to regain
> Love once possessed, nor can be easily
> Repulsed, without much inward passion felt,
> And secret sting of amorous remorse.

The Dalila incident is a moral victory for Samson, and the second step in re-establishing his relationship with God.

The Harapha episode, which comes next, is, again, necessary in the structure of the plot. It could not be transposed, for it is the third step in restoring Samson to God's favour. Further, it develops the relationship between Dagon and Harapha (who represents the Philistines as Samson represents the Jews); it highlights the conflict between God and Dagon; and it paves the way for a change in the relation between Samson and the Philistines.

Its significance in advancing the relationship between Samson and God lies in the fact that Samson sees himself once more as God's champion (ll. 1139–55; 1168–77), and hints that he does not despair of "final pardon." This faith in his ultimate restoration to divine favour is the last step necessary for Samson to take before he can be chosen again as God's agent.

Harapha, representing Dagon, is outfaced by the repeated challenges to combat which Samson (representing God) hurls at him. In the conflict between God and Dagon, consequently, God wins by default, since the cowardly Harapha, muttering threats, refuses to fight and slinks away. This rather academic victory prefigures the actual one which is to occur in the final scene.

The relation between Samson and the Philistines is also advanced in this episode. In order to triumph over them, Samson must regain his strength. That he is doing so is evidenced by the fact that, confident of victory, he is ready and eager to fight Harapha.

The speech of the Chorus which follows (ll. 1268–96) indicates that Samson may be one of those whom God arms with invincible might to overcome the oppression of tyranny (a further indication that Samson may yet be God's champion); or that he may simply have to bear his lot with patience.

The next incident is both necessary and probable. It is safe to assume that Harapha inspired the Philistian lords to have Samson perform at their feast; and it is necessary that Samson have the sum-

mons, in order that he may attend the festival where he is to wreak vengeance on the Philistines. This incident could be neither removed nor transposed; it is probable, in the light of Harapha's muttered threats as he left the stage. Samson at first refuses to perform feats of strength at Dagon's festival; then, suddenly (ll. 1381 ff.), a change occurs; God returns to Samson, and disposes him with "rousing motions" to go to the festival. This is the moment when Discovery takes place, and here again a reference to Aristotle is in order. In discussing types of Discovery, he says: "A third species is . . . through memory, from a man's consciousness being awakened by something seen. . . . A fourth kind is Discovery through reasoning; e.g. in *The Choephoroe*; 'One like me is here; there is no one like me but Orestes; he, therefore, must be here.' " (*Poetics*, 16.) It seems clear that the Discovery in *Samson* partakes of the nature of both these. While for Aristotle they were not the best types of Discovery, they were nevertheless not of the lowest order, either, since they did not depend on mere external marks.

Samson is once more restored to God's favour, and all the potentialities for action in the relationship between him and God are exhausted. Consequently this point is the beginning of the end. In a sudden Reversal, Samson goes with the Officer when that functionary returns for him, taking care to secure the safety of his friends by not having them accompany him.

From here on, the play moves rapidly to its dénouement. All potentialities for action in the three remaining relationships are quickly exhausted. The Philistines at their festival in honour of Dagon represent the static relation to their god which has existed throughout the play. Samson, after a silent prayer to his God, pulls the theatre roof down on the Philistian lords and himself. In death, he is victorious over them once again. And finally, since God was the source of Samson's strength and inspired him to wreak havoc at Dagon's festival, God's victory over the fish-god is completed.

The Hebrew messenger's narration of the catastrophe dignifies it and concentrates attention on its dramatic significance, rather than its sensational aspects. The death of Samson and the Philistines is not the Tragic Incident of the play, as some critics have supposed. There is nothing tragic in it, nor does it involve suffering on any but a physical level. Samson's death is a part of the emotional release of the play. The cathartic effect of the catastrophe is presented by Manoa and the Chorus. After his first shock, Manoa realizes that Samson's death has set him free. When he learns his son died honourably, he does not grieve (ll. 1709–20):

Samson hath quit himself
Like Samson, and heroicly hath finished
A life heroic, on his enemies
Fully revenged—hath left them years of mourning. . . .
And, which is best and happiest yet, all this
With God not parted from him, as was feared,
But favouring and assisting to the end.

The old man plans a monument to his dead son, and the Chorus concludes the sublime catharsis on a note of quiet resignation "And calm of mind, all passion spent."

BRITISH LABOUR AND THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON TRADE UNIONS, 1867–9

H. W. McCready

THE Royal Commission on British trade unions, 1867–9, was brought to life by two events, either of which alone might well have proved fatal to unionism. The decision of the court of Queen's Bench in *Hornby* v. *Close* had questioned the very legality of trade unions, had declared them to be against public policy, and had removed their funds from the protection of the law.[1] In addition to this, the renewal of outrages and murder by the Saw-Grinders of Sheffield had produced a whirlwind of anti-unionism in public opinion.[2] It was the Sheffield employers led by their bitterly anti-unionist M.P., J. A. Roebuck, who first demanded an investigation by the national government, and when the request, seconded though it was by the unionists—they had no alternative—was conceded by the cabinet the workers naturally felt that "Labour on Trial" was the keynote of the hour.[3] Outrages and murder, an apparently class-conscious court of Queen's Bench, employers in full cry against unions and a press almost unanimous in denunciation of them—all created the background for a Royal Commission to which workmen could scarcely look forward with pleasure. The shock-wave these events produced in the labour movement at large can be seen in all directions. It is apparent in the pages of the *BeeHive* and the *Commonwealth*, the leading labour papers of the day; in the tense meetings of the Conference of Amalgamated Trades, and their despatch of George Odger, a union official, to Sheffield to make an investigation; in the adding of rewards to those already offered by the employers and the government for information leading to the arrest of the "Sheffield Fenians"; and so on. The scare was general.[4]

[1]For discussion of this decision see F. Harrison, "The Illegality of Unionism," *BeeHive*, Jan. 26, 1867, 4d–f; R. Y. Hedges and A. Winterbottom, *Legal History of Trade Unionism* (London, 1930), 53–4.

[2]See *Commonwealth*, Oct. 27, 1866, 4a; *BeeHive*, May 25, 1867, 4b; E. S. Beesly, "The Trades Union Commission," *Fortnightly Review*, July, 1867, 1–2.

[3]For the steps leading to the appointment of the Royal Commission see Spencer Walpole, speech in Commons, Feb. 8, 1867, *Hansard*, 3rd Series, CLXXXV, 179–80; *Report of Various Proceedings Taken by the London Trades Council and the Conference of Amalgamated Trades, etc.* (London, 1867).

[4]For labour's reaction see, e.g., *BeeHive*, May 25, 1867, 4b; *Commonwealth*, Oct. 27, 1866, 4a; MSS Minute Book of the Conference of Amalgamated Trades, Webb Coll., XVIII, Section B; *A Full and Authentic Account of Speeches Delivered at the Great Demonstration of Trades Societies in Exeter Hall on Feb. 21, 1867* (London, 1867).

Pessimism about the Royal Commission which had originated in these untoward circumstances deepened when the membership of the commission was announced. The *BeeHive* declared at once:

> We have no confidence in the majority of the members of that Commission. Some of them have been large employers of labour, who have been mixed up in lock-outs, and all belong to a class of society that have generally little sympathy with, and less knowledge of, the working classes. To have given confidence to the trades unions there should have been at least 2 or 3 intelligent workmen on the Commission. . . .[5]

The editors found no reason to change their minds after the Commission had begun its work and five sessions had been held. All but four of the Commissioners at the most "appear to be dead against trades unions," the *BeeHive* reported.[6] Much stronger criticism of Commission personnel was voiced at the Trade Union Congresses of 1868 and 1869.[7] All such complaining was doubtless an expression of unionist fears, however well founded in fact it may have been; adverse legislation was confidently expected to result from the inquiry. George Howell recalled, when writing his recollections of the mid-Victorian labour movement, that there had been ample evidence in the speeches in the House of Commons and in the reports of the press that the purpose of the Royal Commission was not merely the unearthing of unionist crime, but the supplying of a pretext for the suppression of the unions or the stringent curtailment of the liberty the law had allowed them.[8]

The outcome of the investigation was far from being what the unions feared. It proved to be a milestone in their progress, not the means of their destruction. Even the Majority Report of the Commissioners recommended no adverse legislation. The real fruit of the crisis was Bruce's Trade Union Act of 1871—the unions' "Charter of Liberties"—which was completed by further concessions in Cross's Act of 1875. These statutes granted unions full legality, a privileged position with regard to financial liability, protection of funds, and all the other reforms they had wished.

That the actual, if long-term, results of the crisis of 1866–7 were so far from realizing the fears of the unionists is to be explained by a number of factors. Perhaps the most important was the new franchise of 1867 by which working-class votes became of importance to the politicians and both parties moved to satisfy labour's legislative de-

[5] *BeeHive*, Feb. 16, 1867, 4c.
[6] *Ibid.*, April 13, 1867, 4c; and see *The Times*, March 20, 1867, 9e–f.
[7] *BeeHive* reports, June 13, 1868, 5e–f and Aug. 28, 1869, 6e–7d.
[8] *Labour Legislation, Labour Movements and Labour Leaders* (London, 1902), 164.

mands. A significant role was also played by the Parliamentary Committee of the Trade Union Congress, which, with the expert assistance of such middle-class radicals and liberals as Henry Crompton, William Harcourt, A. J. Mundella, and Frederic Harrison, maintained a sustained and most successful lobby at Westminster. But the unionists were also assisted by the nature of the Commission's activities. What had at first seemed certain to be an investigation of crime and violence on the part of trade unions in places like Sheffield, was broadened into a survey not only of unionism as a whole and in all its aspects and operations but of masters' associations as well. The Commissioners were instructed to

> inquire into and report on the Organization and Rules of Trades Unions and other Associations, whether of Workmen or Employers, and to inquire into and report on the effect produced by such Trades Unions on the Workmen and Employers respectively, and on the Relations between Workmen and Employers, and on the Trade and Industry of the Country; with power to investigate any recent acts of intimidation, outrage, or wrong alleged to have been promoted, encouraged, or connived at by such Trades Unions or other Associations. . . .[9]

In the end the outrages which led to the Royal Commission played an insignificant part in determining its outcome. They were delegated to two subsidiary commissions which dealt quickly with the events in Sheffield and Manchester. The evidence attracted public notice only once—when Broadhead made his famous confessions—and then was soon forgotten.[10] The focussing of the Commission's work on the general and normal operations of the unions of the whole land rather than on the criminal activities of the raw fringe was a triumph for labour and went far to inoculate the Commission. Spencer Walpole, the Home Secretary, explained to the House of Commons, when introducing the Bill to give the Commission powers, why the government had accepted the unionist recommendations for a general inquiry rather than the employers' plan for an inquest on outrages. The labour laws of the country were, he pointed out, unsatisfactory and uncertain and there was general ignorance in Parliament on the whole matter. The *Hornby* v. *Close* decision and the Sheffield outrages had made some legislation necessary and both Parliament and Government needed to be better informed. The general scope which was for these reasons given the Commission enabled the unions to put their best foot

[9] *First Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the Organization & Rules of Trade Unions and Other Associations* (London, 1867), iii.

[10] It was at this point that public reaction reached its height. See *The Times*, April 27 and May 3, 1867; *Quarterly Review*, July 1867, 270, Oct. 1867, 378; *Edinburgh Review*, Oct. 1867, 449. But the reports on outrages were buried in a brief Appendix to the *Eleventh and Final Report of the Commissioners*, II, 41–56.

forward. George Potter, editor of the *BeeHive*, was even able to find some basis for optimism in the terms of reference. The inquiry would, he pointed out, provide a splendid opportunity for educating the public and clearing away popular prejudice and ignorance.[11]

Finally, it appears that the outcome of the crisis of 1866–7 owed something to the skill and energy with which the unions' interests were managed in the Commission by Frederic Harrison, the official representative of organized labour. The appointment of a representative of labour to a Royal Commission dealing with labour affairs was in 1867 without precedent. Harrison's addition to the body therefore gave the unions an unexpected advantage which, even if it was offset to a degree by the appointment of a representative of the employers, placed the union interest in a stronger position than could have been anticipated. The ideal would, of course, have been the appointment of two or three union men. Both George Potter's London Working Men's Association, representing the more radical wing of organized labour, and the Conference of Amalgamated Trades–London Trades Council leaders representing the great "amalgamateds" waited on Spencer Walpole in February, 1867, to press for the inclusion of some members of the working classes.[12] Walpole in explaining his refusal evaded the question of class and took his stand on what he called the accepted principle that judicial bodies should be composed, not of the parties involved, but of men who took an interest in the subject and who could present the views of the different parties.

The deputation of the London Working Men's Association did, however, secure what they considered "the next best thing"—the appointment of a "gentleman" representative who knew the unions and had the confidence of their members. Walpole gave in to their pressure on this point and asked for names. Those mentioned by the Potter-Hartwell delegation make a good list of the middle-class radicals who were in the 1860's acting with the trade unions as apologists and expert counsellors—Frederic Harrison, Professor E. S. Beesly, Professor Goldwin Smith, J. M. Ludlow, Godfrey Lushington, John Holmes and Mr. Newton. Harrison's name was selected by Walpole as one he was prepared to submit to the cabinet, and the deputation concurred enthusiastically. Harrison had, it was agreed, the knowledge of unions and the confidence of unionists that was necessary.[13] His appointment

[11]W. J. Davis, *British Trade Union Congresses: History and Recollections* (London, 1910), 138.

[12]*The Times*, Feb. 9, 1867, 10f; *Report of Various Proceedings*, 31–4; MSS Minute Book of the Conference of Amalgamated Trades, Feb. 21, 1867, meeting.

[13]On these matters see, *Report of Various Proceedings*, 33; Walpole's speech on the Third Reading, Feb. 18, 1867, *Hansard*, 3rd Series, CLXXXV, 523–6; *The Times*, Feb. 9, 1867, 10f.

gave general satisfaction to all branches of the union movement. He was prominent in the small group of middle-class radicals who collaborated actively with the unions; he had long been their apologist in the press, and he had for years past been a regular writer in the labour newspapers.[14] Walpole told the House of Commons:

> [Harrison] has written more ably on this subject, in favour of trades unions, than any other author I know of. If any Member in the House has read Mr. Harrison's works he will know that I do not exaggerate in the least when I affirm that there is no man who more fully, more completely or more ably represents the views of the working classes than Mr. Harrison.[15]

The appointment came as a complete surprise to Harrison. He had been consulted neither by the unionist nor by the Home Office and learned of what had been done only from *The Times* the next morning.[16] He accepted the appointment despite the fact that it appeared to be professional suicide to do so. His father warned that his opportunities in Lincoln's Inn would be sadly reduced and more than one eminent solicitor told him he must expect to quit the profession altogether if he served on the Commission as the representative of the workers.[17] Such was the contaminating power of trade unions in 1867. Harrison's legal career did not, in fact, long survive his Commission work.

Harrison found his nine colleagues not much to his liking.[18] Though impanelled as a judicial body most of the members of the Commission were partial and prejudiced. Sir William Erle, the Chairman, was anti-union and a dogged adherent of the obsolete doctrine of restraint of trade, individual contracts, and the orthodox plutonomy of the day; Roebuck was notoriously anti-union; Herman Merivale was a devotee of orthodox economics; Sir Daniel Gooch, the Chairman of the Great Western Railway, and William Mathews, the Chairman of the Midland Iron Masters' League, were men of big business and both keen opponents of unions. Harrison found that only the two peers, Lord Elcho and the Earl of Lichfield, were judicial. He was greatly impressed with the ability and sense of justice of both of them and in recollection thought that Elcho had "completely dominated the Com-

[14]See Potter's speech at Conference of Trades Delegates, March, 1867, given in full in Davis, *British Trade Union Congresses*, 139; *BeeHive*, August 3, 1867, 4d–e; and report of Congress discussion, *ibid.*, June 13, 1868, 5d.

[15]Speech on Third Reading, Feb. 18, 1867, *Hansard*, CLXXXV, 524.

[16]F. Harrison, *Autobiographic Memoirs* (London, 1911), I, 315–6.

[17]*Ibid.*; and "Socialist Unionism," in *Nineteenth Century*, 1889, reprinted in *National and Social Problems* (London, 1908), 423.

[18]*Autobiographic Memoirs*, I, 322–3.

mission."[19] Tom Hughes, M.P., the novelist and Christian Socialist leader, alone among his fellow-commissioners, was a friend of unions and workingmen. He and Harrison had been partners in fighting the unions' battles ever since the builders' strike of 1861. But their collaboration was not to go far in this case for Hughes found himself so pressed with parliamentary and other business that the Commission got little of his time and his attendance was most irregular.[20] Harrison was, therefore, isolated and for all practical purposes labour's cause was effectively in his hands alone—with the odds heavily against it. John Kane lamented at the Trades Union Congress of 1868 that Harrison could not be expected "to do justice to the interest of working men in such a Commission as that."[21] He had, however, the close co-operation and support of the whole union movement, and especially of the so-called Junta, whose principal figure, Robert Applegarth, was early admitted by the Commission as an official observer. Applegarth, Allan, Howell, and the rest provided Harrison with a far better organized and determined body of support outside the Commission than either Gooch or Mathews could command.[22]

Harrison proved himself a first-rate choice from the unionist point of view. Kane, it is true, was somewhat critical of him when addressing the Trades Union Congress in 1868:

> No doubt he was well posted up in law, but not in the technicalities of trades. The greatest difficulties had been experienced in posting him up in the processes which were most important to enable the Commissioners to understand the business brought before them. . . . The Commissioners admitted Mr. Harrison because he belonged to the "parchment cloth"; he was a gentleman and a scholar removed from the working men and their interests. . . .[23]

Kane's attitude was, however, exceptional. Not only was Harrison most assiduous in his attendance, missing only 8 of 47 sessions spread over a 17-month period, he was certainly the most active member of the Commission. Leaving aside his endeavours outside the Commission—his counselling the Conference of Amalgamated Trades, his first-hand investigation of unions and industries in the North, and his keeping

[19] *Ibid.*

[20] *Ibid.* Hughes was at this time losing interest in the labour movement and turning to other matters. See W. H. G. Armytage, "New Light on the English Background of Thomas Hughes' Rugby Colony in Tennessee," *East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications*, no. 21 (1949), 69–81.

[21] *BeeHive*, June 13, 1868, 5d–e.

[22] Harrison, *Autobiographic Memoirs*, I, 322; F. Harrison to E. S. Beesly, n.d., Harrison Papers, 12 (the Harrison Papers are in the keeping of a grandson to whom the author is much obliged).

[23] *BeeHive*, June 13, 1868, 5e–f.

Professor Beesly posted as the unionist spokesman in the press[24]—it is clear, even from a cursory review of the Royal Commission's ten volumes of evidence, that Harrison was the most energetic examiner and cross-examiner, always alert to bring out the union position to the best advantage and to deal with the charges of the anti-union witnesses when their turn came. There seem to have been grounds for his conceit in thinking that the union cause suffered in his absence.[25]

Harrison had a two-fold task to perform in the Commission. One was to counter the attacks of the masters and their friends and to defeat them in their endeavour to make the Commission the means of suppressing the unions by legislative enactment. He had to offset their evidence and expose their prejudice and ignorance. On the other hand, he had, of course, to bring out the unions' argument: their strength and the scope of their operations; their importance to the working classes and to society; and so on. He had to show that they deserved social acceptance as well as legal recognition and protection.

Of the two tasks the former was the more difficult. One source of trouble was the revelations of unionist terrorism made before the Sheffield inquiry by Broadhead, revelations which played completely into the hands of the opposition. Harrison was thoroughly grieved and shocked by them. He was still more shocked by what he called "a sort of general selfishness" among unionists which had come out in the Sheffield inquiry. He wrote to Beesly:

> I feel the position is very difficult. But I am quite clear. I am not going to cave in now. The unions have serious faults but I still believe them necessary as I do Railways, and capable of improvement. Broadhead is evidently a man like the Warsaw secret committee. I think of writing an address to the unions. I go to the Commission tomorrow and on Wednesday. There will be stiff work and I shall have a bad time. I have not met Roebuck since the Sheffield business grew serious. I am going to urge that the Government instruct the Sheffield Commission to extend their inquiry into *all* cases of outrage which come before us. They are very few and very vague. We had up last time an inspector of police of Lancashire who could speak to no case of even suspected outrage in his recollection.[26]

The Commission was at that very time examining anti-union witnesses, and Harrison had to redouble his activity in order to make up

[24]On these matters see MSS. Minute Book of the Conference of Amalgamated Trades, Webb Coll., XVIII, Section B; F. Harrison to Louisa Shore, Feb. 17, 1869, Harrison Papers, 14. Various letters to Beesly in Harrison Papers, 12, deal with such matters as the passing out information to Beesly, the arranging for early delivery of printed evidence, and the prodding of Beesly to write in the *BeeHive*, *Pall Mall Gazette*, etc. Beesly produced two major articles of unionist apology in the *Fortnightly* in these months—both of them, as Harrison's letters show, with the latter's co-operation; see "Amalgamated Society of Carpenters," March, 1867, 319–34; "The Trades Union Commission," July, 1867, 1–18.

[25]F. Harrison to Louisa Shore, May 13, 1867, Harrison Papers, 12.

[26]F. Harrison to E. S. Beesly, June 24, 1867, Harrison Papers, 12.

the ground that had been lost in Sheffield. The sittings of June and July, 1867, found him doing his utmost to counter the attacks of the party of capital. When the Commission resumed its work in the late autumn he was still conducting a one-man defensive action against the succession of anti-union witnesses who appeared in November.[27] It appears from the Reports of the Commission that it was in the November sessions, after the Broadhead affair had somewhat died down, that he had his first real opportunity to upset the masters' argument.

The second major problem which faced Harrison in dealing with the critics was the impressive evidence presented on behalf of the masters by Alfred Mault, secretary of the General Builders' Association. Mault appeared before the Commission on five occasions in May-June, 1867, and on four gave evidence at great length.[28] Harrison was not present the first time Mault was examined, on May 7, but he read the evidence given by him on that occasion[29] and heard him the other four times. Harrison was deeply impressed with his indictment of the unions. Indeed, he confessed to Beesly that he was almost converted by it:

> His evidence is serious. He has a mass of cases of petty exactions all over the North chiefly against the masons and plasterers. It is worse than anything we ever heard of and is very damaging. I am free to say that if the unions cannot get over it, some of them and certainly the Masons deserve all that was ever said of them and are as mere organs of class tyranny. My God! Think if I were to publish a formal Recantation. But I keep my counsel as yet. Keep this to yourself. He formally exonerates Applegarth and his society. Mault is an exceedingly clever fellow who has got up his case perfectly. If they can't beat him the game is up.[30]

Harrison had some of Mault's assertions checked by his clients[31] and in the sittings of May 14 and June 5 he set out to shake his position as far as he could. By persistent questioning and the introduction of a great deal of new evidence, all of it intensely factual, which showed that he had an intimate knowledge of the matters in question and had been well briefed for his cross-examination, Harrison managed to change the complexion of the situation somewhat. He was able to upset Mault in his insistence that the unions were opposed to the use of machines for the sawing and grinding of stone; he showed that Mault

[27] See *Third, Fourth and Fifth Reports*, passim, which cover these months. Most of the witnesses who appeared at this time were anti-union.

[28] Mault appeared on May 7, 14, 21, 28, and June 5, 1867. On the first two occasions the whole session was given to him and on the last two he was questioned at considerable length.

[29] Q. 3421.

[30] F. Harrison to E. S. Beesly, Wednesday, n.d., Harrison Papers, 12.

[31] F. Harrison to E. S. Beesly, Thursday, n.d., Harrison Papers, 12.

had no evidence for his charge that a union had been guilty of destroying bricks in considerable quantity in Sheffield; he challenged Mault's contention that unions incited their members to acts of violence; and he carried the war into the opponents' own camp by attacking the rules of a local master builders' association.[32]

Not all the masters were as formidable as Mault and there were even a few of them who gave evidence on the other side. A. J. Mundella, soon to displace Roebuck as Liberal M.P. for Sheffield, was one such pro-union employer and Harrison found his load lightened considerably by Mundella's evidence. In a letter to Beesly, Harrison remarked:

> Mundella's evidence is first rate. He is a thorough trump, a regular unionist by nature who like Pisistratus or someone "has taken the demos into partnership" and made a joint union of Masters and men which at any rate keeps quiet within the field and bullies outside employers savagely. Mundella said, "If we find an employer underselling us by cutting down the wages we interfere." How? "Oh," said he coolly, "we arrange to take on his hands ourselves! and then we just leave him to the men's union." He will turn Roebuck out for Sheffield who is now really uneasy. That is Applegarth's doing.[33]

The special difficulties presented by the Broadhead story and by Mault's compelling evidence were, however, of temporary if serious weight. The problem of meeting the anti-union evidence, of which these matters were but two particularly troublesome aspects, was coterminous with the whole inquiry. The argument against the unions was presented to the Commission again and again with many variations by the masters themselves, by factory managers and the secretaries of masters' associations, by anti-union working men, foremen, and so on, and by anti-union experts such as A. S. Hewitt, an American labour relations man, and R. Tucker, an actuary. Harrison's methods took a variety of forms in examining these witnesses, but it is striking how often he reduced charges to prejudice and allegations to hearsay. In general the anti-union witnesses were weak on concrete examples; Harrison invariably had a wealth of facts at hand, garnered from the whole field of industry.

Harrison's best defence was the counter-attack and he carried it to the masters in a variety of ways. He showed that they paid the lowest wages men would take, that they had the same complaints to make where there were no unions, and that their practices in industrial and labour relations were no better than they should be. He made much of the fact that the masters, too, had their unions. Co-operation in

[32]For these developments see Qs. 3233 seq., 3252 seq., 4106 seq., 3396 seq.
[33]F. Harrison to E. S. Beesly, July 25, 1868, Harrison Papers, 13.

opposition to strikes was scarcely worse than co-operation in their support.

The other side of the Commission's subject was presented by union members and by the few pro-union employers like Mundella.[34] Of the former the members of the Junta were the most prominent and important, and things might well have gone very differently for the unions had it not been for the imposing weight of evidence presented by those cautious, conservative heads of the great national organizations. It was comparatively easy for Robert Applegarth, William Allan, and the rest to dissociate themselves from the turbulent little unions and to prove that the mass of their members were orderly, law-abiding citizens. It was the strategy of these members of the Junta to show that they were much more representative of unionism than the Saw-Grinders of Sheffield, a task made the easier when the party of capital mistakenly concentrated its attack on the most respectable and defensible part of organized labour.[35] Applegarth, whose role on the unionists' side was at least as significant as that of Mault on the Masters',[36] put the Amalgamated Engineers forward as the model union and dwelt at length on the services it provided in the form of benefits. Perhaps the best illustration of his moderation and of that of the unions he spoke for is to be found in what he had to say about picketing (he would have moral suasion only) and in the legislation which he proposed. According to Applegarth the national unions sought no more from the legislature than protection of their funds from embezzlement and the right to invest them in property, securities, and co-operative enterprises.[37] Objection could hardly be made to such modest requests.

Harrison was less active when the Commission was taking the evidence of Applegarth and the unionists. Other Commissioners could elicit the facts, and the evidence did not then look prepared, as it often did when a representative of the unions was in action. Nevertheless, Harrison did take a large share of the questioning here also, conducting the inquiry himself on occasion and intervening frequently to rescue a unionist in distress or to correct the impressions left by another questioner.[38] The published record makes it clear that he was quick to bring out the beneficial side of unions for the Commission and to put the best, the most constructive, face upon them.

[34]Besides Mundella there were a few Welsh colliery owners who had no personal experience of unions but thought they might well have a stabilizing effect.

[35]S. and B. Webb, *The History of Trade Unions* (London, 1907), 250–1.

[36]Applegarth appeared four times and answered 631 questions.

[37]These illustrations of Applegarth's position may be found under Qs. 6602, 6606, 6608, 6677, 6736, 6665.

[38]E.g., Qs. 6660, 7147 seq.

Analysis of the voluminous evidence put into the record by the union men is out of the question here, but one or two features of the presentation may be mentioned. First, there was obviously a good deal of careful planning behind the appearance of the wage-earners before the Commission. Harrison collaborated closely with Applegarth outside the Commission, consulting with him on the proceedings and arranging for him to go to Bradford, for example, to check on some of Mault's evidence.[39] He arranged for Howell's appearance as a witness and wrote to tell him what the subjects of questioning would be.[40] There is further evidence of efficient organization in the Commission itself where Harrison regularly asked unionist witnesses leading questions to enable them to put into the record statements that had been prepared in advance. On other occasions, Harrison would state a point or position at some length in the form of a question to which the witness had only to give his assent.[41] It should be added, however, that he did not always get the answers he wanted and certainly not everything was rehearsed. It must also be noted that Harrison did on occasion expose objectionable elements in union practices and showed no disposition to hush them up. He was, for example, very critical of a masons' rule limiting the work that one man might do in a day.[42] But for the most part the unions' spokesman left such matters to Roebuck and Mathews who brought out whatever could be found against the unions. Throughout Harrison displayed a close acquaintance with the problems, developments, and practices of trade unions as well as a full knowledge of their argument for acceptance and legalization.

The Commission finished taking evidence in July, 1868, and did not meet for the purpose of considering its report until December. There is little to show what took place during the interval. Harrison was certainly busy with Commission business and had in September to ask John Morley to postpone an article promised for the *Fortnightly Review*.[43] It was during these months that he prepared the memorandum dated November, 1868, which was placed before the Commission when it resumed its meetings.[44] Once the final task of drafting recommendations for the government had been taken up there was

[39]F. Harrison to E. S. Beesly, Thursday, n.d., Harrison Papers, 12.

[40]F. Harrison to G. Howell, n.d. (filed with Feb. 1868), Howell Letters, 18, Bishopgate Institute.

[41]E.g., Qs. 6667–78.

[42]Qs. 1212 seq.

[43]Harrison's letter making this request has not survived but it is clear from Morley's reply; J. Morley to F. Harrison, Sept. 6, 1868, Harrison Papers, I.

[44]The memorandum was not printed in the *Reports* of the Commission; a copy is in the Lushington Papers at Ockham Hall, Hampshire. It is headed, "Private and Confidential—For the use of the Commissioners only."

strenuous work for the unions' representative and the business was not concluded until March, 1869. In December, Harrison wrote to his friend Beesly: "It is very hard work [in the Commission], and I have been talking, protesting all day and am quite tired. God, I wish we were in it together. . . . It is immensely exciting. We go at it every day and all day."[45] In the following February they were still at it. As he explained to Louisa Shore, he had not been out of London during the holidays and had been living in "Bluebook-land . . . a very ogrelike country." He went on: "The fact is I have been harried out of existence by the Commission. We have had four months of constant fights, and I have written volumes of notes and memoranda and letters. Non letter-writing phantom!—Why I am a letter-writing machine all steel and iron, or if a phantom at all I have been worn to it by letter-writing."[46]

"Months of constant fights" referred, of course, to the struggle for the final report between the two parties among the Commissioners—those who were prepared to recommend little improvement of the unions' position, and those who were prepared to recommend acceptance of all their demands. Booth, Roebuck, and Erle were in the former camp; Harrison and Hughes in the latter, supported on occasion by Merivale and the two peers, Elcho and Litchfield.[47] The wrangling went on at great length. In January, 1869, Henry Crompton, who knew from Harrison what was going on in the Commission, wrote to Mundella: "It is impossible to say what it [the report] will be—probably a mere skeleton compromise";[48] and at mid-February Harrison wrote that the report was still not settled.[49]

The discussions in the Commission were based on a memorandum presented by the secretary, James Booth, a memorandum prepared, Harrison later recalled, at the instigation of the chairman, Sir William Erle. The chairman hoped, apparently, to get an unanimous report by modifying Booth's draft so far as was necessary in order to satisfy the other members of the Commission.[50] Harrison and Hughes set out

[45]F. Harrison to E. S. Beesly, Tuesday, n.d. [Dec. 15, 1868], Harrison Papers, 13.

[46]F. Harrison to Louisa Shore, Feb. 17, 1869, *ibid.*, 14.

[47]Harrison, *Autobiographic Memoirs*, I, 323. Mundella wrote that he had learned from Booth, a Commissioner, that Roebuck "has done his utmost to bring about mischief by imposing harsh restrictions on the Trades. F. Harrison says plainly that what has been proposed would produce a *revolution*." A. J. Mundella to R. Leader, Jan. 3, 1869, Mundella Papers, Sheffield University.

[48]H. Crompton to A. J. Mundella, Jan. 7, 1869, Mundella Papers. In a postscript Crompton promises to send Mundella the report as soon as it is out and "if anything definite is decided I will let you know, as I hear all that goes on from Harrison."

[49]F. Harrison to Louisa Shore, Feb. 17, 1869, Harrison Papers, 14.

[50]Harrison, *Autobiographic Memoirs*, I, 323; F. Harrison to E. S. Beesly [Tuesday, Dec. 15, 1868], Harrison Papers, 14.

to alter it radically and according to a letter Harrison wrote at the time and his recollections many years later, they were highly successful in this endeavour. He wrote to Beesly in December:

> We are getting on first rate at the Commission and are regularly breaking down the Report, and, except formal parts (*open for me to revise*) only 6 pages as yet survive out of 32 already gone over. Yesterday and today we took "Proposed Legislation" which is twelve pages. Of this twelve pages only two or three sentences survived yesterday and not a single line today! The two fundamental clauses as to Combination were proposed by me and carried. In fact Roebuck and Booth are muttering that nothing is left. Roebuck says he can't sign it in its meagre form! and Booth will have to decline to sign his own Report! Whenever there has been a division against us it is only carried by Erle's own vote and then his casting vote. He goes in . . . trying to *smother* us. But we fight every line, sentence and word and whittle it down to nothing, and then we shall consider if we can sign after all.[51]

The strategy of Harrison and Hughes was plainly to remove all they and their unionist friends disliked from the Booth draft and mould it, so far as they could, to their own liking, getting as many of the trade union demands into it as possible. But it seems clear that Harrison had from the outset a separate report in mind, for he wrote to Hughes to this effect before the sessions of the Commission were resumed in December, 1868. In a letter marked "Confidential" which must have been written in the late summer or autumn of 1868, he proposed to Hughes the bringing in of a separate report which would be, he said, an armoury of liberal ideas on the subject and which might exert a continuing influence on government, parliament, and public until "our side won," and he set forth all the principles which later were to appear in the Minority Report.[52] It is clear he still had this plan in mind when he wrote to Beesly in December, for even though he seemed to be having great success in whittling down Booth's memorandum and putting into it his own ideas about combination, he remarked that it was still a question in his mind whether he and Hughes would sign it. Apparently, then, the strategy of the pro-union Commissioners was to change the Booth draft as much as they could, though they had no hope of making it embody their ideas completely, and then to bring in their own report as well. Professor Lujo Brentano of the University of Breslau summed the situation up conveniently in a letter of 1873. He wrote Harrison asking for information about the Trade Union Commission to use in a controversy

[51]Same letter.

[52]F. Harrison to T. Hughes, 1868, "Confidential." I am indebted to Professor E. C. Mack of City College, New York for this letter.

regarding legal reform for German trade unions and recited what he remembered having been told about the matter when in England.

> Now what [*sic*] regards the Majority Report I think to have been told in England that it was drawn up by Mr. Booth, but that you and Mr. Hughes had argued on this Draft Report of Mr. Booth, until you reduced it to what it is now; but that they the majority expected you also to sign their report and that when you and Mr. Hughes and Ld. Lichfield refused and you and Mr. Hughes made a separate statement the majority was so angry that it ordered Mr. Booth's report to be appended to the report in the same types as the report. Please tell me whether I remember rightly that that was the course which the Commission took.[53]

Harrison replied that Brentano's statements were "strictly correct."[54]

The outcome of the Commission's discussions of December, January, and February was, at least in some measure, what Harrison had planned. There was no agreed set of findings, no unanimous report. A Majority Report was signed by seven of the Commissioners: Erle, Elcho, Gooch, Merivale, Booth, Roebuck, and Mathews. To this there were three Dissents—one entered by Elcho alone, consisting of one sentence; another by Elcho and Merivale of half a page; and a third signed by Lichfield, Hughes, and Harrison of two full pages. Attached to the Third Dissent there was a "Detailed Statement referred to in the foregoing Dissent," signed by Harrison and Hughes alone and running to twenty-two pages.[55] This last was the Minority Report. As Harrison explained to Brentano, it expanded the Third Dissent, and it could therefore be taken that Lichfield accepted the essentials of it. "Lord Lichfield would probably have signed it," Harrison wrote, "but for some passages and phrases which perhaps we had better have omitted. In substance he was entirely with us. On no point of proposed legislation did he differ from us."[56]

With regard to the Majority Report, it appears that Harrison was not as successful in remodelling it as he boasted. A comparison of the final form of that Report with the original draft does not suggest that Harrison had torn the latter to shreds. Probably he exaggerated his accomplishments when he wrote to Beesly in the heat of battle in December, 1868, for it is clear that the Majority Report derived principally from Booth's proposals, the bulk of it being taken word for word from his memorandum. Some important changes, however, were made in it by the Commission. Its strong anti-union tone was much

[53] L. Brentano to F. Harrison, March 2, 1873, Harrison Papers, 17.

[54] F. Harrison to L. Brentano, n.d., Brentano Papers, lent by Miss Sophie Brentano.

[55] *Eleventh and Final Report of the Commissioners*, I, xii–xxxiv.

[56] F. Harrison to L. Brentano, n.d. (in reply to letter of March 3, 1873), Brentano Papers.

modified, especially in the early sections which describe the organization, aims, and so on, of unions. The final Report of the majority of the Commissioners was therefore a much milder document than the original draft. Moreover, there are in the final Report two paragraphs taken directly from Harrison's memorandum. These are paragraphs 31 and 51 dealing with the relationship of unions to strikes and with their effects on the state of trade, which were taken over word for word by the majority.[57] In addition, there are some parts of the Majority Report which are to be found neither in Booth's nor in Harrison's memoranda but which closely resemble the arguments of the latter. Paragraph 50, for example, which points out that anti-union evidence has come not from workmen but only from the masters, and the whole section on "The Effects of Trades Unions on the Trade and Industry of the Country"[58] clearly follow the general sense of the Harrison position. Finally, it should be noted that the section of the Majority Report on "Proposed Legislation" is only slightly dependent upon Booth; how much of it was contributed by the union spokesmen cannot be estimated.

All this, if hardly sufficient to justify what Harrison wrote to Beesly in December, 1868, is, perhaps, sufficient to warrant what he wrote to Brentano in 1873 when the latter inquired about the operations of the Commission. The Majority Report, he then wrote, was Booth's draft in modified form "with all its character cut out."[59] Certainly, some of the credit for changing it must go to Harrison and Hughes, though it must be recalled that they were not the only dissenters in the Commission. Elcho, Merivale, and Lichfield also entered objections to the majority's recommendations and we may therefore assume that they too played a part in modifying the Booth draft in the course of the Commission's deliberations.

The Majority Report was neither the indictment the opponents of unions had been awaiting nor the programme the unionists wanted. Some legal protection for unions was recommended, but since the majority's position was based on the assumption that the office of the law was the maintenance of conditions of unrestricted enterprise, full legal status was denied. No combination, for example, was to be considered lawful which refused work with non-unionists, and the doctrine of restraint of trade was to be undisturbed. The majority, moreover, expressly approved important points in the existing law to which the wage-earners had long objected. This was the case with regard to

[57] *Eleventh and Final Report of the Commissioners*, I, xiv–xv, xviii.
[58] Cf. Parags. 50, 51–5 and Harrison memorandum, 13, 20–4.
[59] F. Harrison to L. Brentano, n.d. (in reply to letter of March 3, 1873), Brentano Papers.

picketing and breach of contract; and virtually the same position was taken with regard to the protection of union funds.[60]

There was, as the Webbs point out,[61] nothing in these, the vital recommendations of the majority, to make the position of the unions worse. But there was little to improve their status or to ensure reform of the existing law in their favour. Applegarth had not a good word to say for them. The majority had in effect decided, he wrote, that there should be "one law for the rich and another for the poor, that trade unionists should be legislated for as 'a dangerous class' instead of as citizens of a free country. . . ."[62] Harrison and Hughes took the same position. They, too, protested against the continuation of special laws against labour. They urged unqualified legalization of unions, protection of their funds, and the incorporation of the working classes into society by the repeal of all laws defining offences which they alone could commit.

The second part of Harrison's strategy in the final phase of the Commission's business called for bringing in a separate report to serve as the programme of the radicals and working men for the future.[63] This Minority Report, written by Harrison[64] and signed by himself and Hughes, was introduced as a memorandum when the Commission met in December. With virtually no change it was printed in the Commission's *Final Report* as an appendix to the Third Dissent, a full statement of the minority position.

The first part of Harrison's report soon was reckoned a classic defence of unionism—or rather of mid-Victorian unionism, the Old Unionism as it was shortly to be known. According to *Capital and Labour*, the organ of British capitalists, which devoted three articles to it, "as a piece of special pleading in favour of unions it is almost exhaustive and in that sense has considerable value. It is improbable that the case of the unions can be presented again in so attractive and specious a form."[65]

Harrison based his apology largely on the big unions, the "amalgamateds," upon which the party of capital had mistakenly con-

[60]These matters are dealt with in *Eleventh and Final Report of the Commissioners*, xx–xxv.

[61]Webbs, *History of Trade Unions*, 253.

[62]In his introduction to *Ninth Annual Report of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners* (London, 1869); see also A. W. Humphrey, *Life of Robert Applegarth* (London, 1918), 265–6.

[63]F. Harrison to T. Hughes, 1868, "Confidential."

[64]The evidence for Harrison's authorship of the Minority Report signed by him and Hughes is Harrison's own statement in his *Autobiographic Memoirs*, I, 323; Webbs, *History of Trade Unions*, 254; and *Law Times*' article reprinted in *Bee-Hive*, June 5, 1869, 1c.

[65]The quotation is from the article of March 3, 1875, 18. The other two are March 10, 40–1, and March 17, 59–61.

centrated in the course of the investigation. In basing his rationale of union principles and practices on them Harrison was able to exploit many of the bourgeois prepossessions of the day and so make out a strong case for full legalization and for the other reforms the unions wanted. Unions were composed, he noted, for the most part of the upper classes of labour. Not all the skilled workmen were members, but "it has not been suggested by anyone that the union is ever composed of the inferior order of workmen, although it may not invariably be composed of the superior."[66] The structures which these workmen had developed in the past few decades ranked with the biggest and the best of big business. The Amalgamated Society of Engineers, for example, had a centralized organization and membership roll, a budget, a range of services, and a national scope to its activities that placed it on a level with a large railroad or a first-rate mercantile company.[67] It was equally as conservative, efficient, and respectable; and its wealth and size gave it a sense of responsibility to which the small trade clubs of an earlier age of unionism had never aspired.

> It may be said that those societies which offer the greatest amount of assurance benefits to their subscribers are just those which are least disposed to expend their accumulations in labour contests. Over a period of ten years the engineers with 33,000 members have expended in benefits £459,000, in disputes £26,000, or about 6 per cent; and the ironfounders with 10,000 members have expended in benefits £210,000 and in disputes £5,300 or about 2½ per cent of their funds. We thus see that in proportion as the unions acquire extent in their area, regularity and publicity in their transactions, and become properly constituted associations, they gain in character and usefulness. In proportion as they are irregular in organization and approach the form of the old secret trade union, without "benefits," they preserve some criminal features of the surreptitious unions under the old law.[68]

In Harrison's hands the union enterprise became one of the great examples of Victorian business success—and of moral progress.

Harrison exploited the prejudices and assumptions of the day in other ways: he pointed to the parallel and accepted practices of commercial companies and of employers' and professional associations; he appealed to the Victorian conscience about the conditions of labour (defining a trade union as an organization for "securing the most favourable conditions of labour"); he postulated the ideals of harmony of interest and equality before the law; and so on.[69] The foundation of his case, however, he saw in the idea of freedom. The working classes like the masters, he argued, deserved to be free to pursue their own interest as they saw fit and to the best of their ability. Though

[66] *Eleventh and Final Report of the Commissioners*, I, xxxii.
[67] *Ibid.*, xxxiii. [68] *Ibid.*, xxxv. [69] *Ibid.*, xl, xlii.

there were no differences of interest between working classes and general public, there was a real conflict between masters and men.

> In this battle of interest, in which neither party acknowledge any obligation beyond that of securing their own interests, the only safe rule for the state appears to us to be absolute impartiality. So long as no breach of the general law results, and no legislative restriction exists, the consequences of their conduct must be borne by each party for themselves.[70]

The concept of the neutral state was thus a fundamenal assumption. Combination was simply the correlative of competition, the means by which the weaker pursued their own interests. As long as it was assumed that every man was duty-bound to secure his own interest, the state had no ground for outlawing the method of the weaker group while it honoured that of the stronger. Unionism was not a new protectionism; it was an extension of the principle of Free Trade. "We can understand no freedom of trade in which workmen are not free to stipulate with an employer in concert for their own conditions." Restriction was not in accord with the spirit of modern legislation.[71]

Having, in the form of conclusions from the evidence, made out his case for the social and legal acceptance of unions, Harrison went on in the second part of his Report to deal with reform of the law. The existing law was obviously, he pointed out, faulty in many respects. It was vague and uncertain and it made every association of masters and men seem illegal in some respect. Worse still, class discrimination was one of its principles. The Combination Act applied in practice only to workmen. It defined as criminal such acts as "verbal threats," "molestation," "intimidation," when done by workmen in combination, though these acts were criminal in no other context. And finally, the existing law left union funds open to embezzlement, as the decision in *Hornby* v. *Close* had demonstrated. Legislation was therefore necessary, and Harrison went on to argue that it ought to be based on the principle of freedom—freedom for the working classes to organize and bind themselves as they pleased.

The programme of reform Harrison proposed in the conclusion to his Report was simple in the extreme.[72] Three of his four recommendations were negative: the repeal of the Combination Acts, and the suspension, by simple declaration, of the Law of Conspiracy and of the Common Law doctrine of restraint of trade so far as unions were concerned. By the removal of these three items from the existing "labour laws" complete liberty of association and of action would be conferred upon the working classes, and the basic principle of the Minority Report realized. All working-class organizations would be

[70] *Ibid.*, xxxviii. [71] *Ibid.*, lxiii.
[72] *Ibid.*, lxiii–lxiv, "Propositions Respecting Amendment of the Law."

legal. They would be enabled to pursue any objectives they wished, and working men like other citizens would be subject only to the general criminal law of the land. It was on these grounds that Harrison's Report was hailed as the "complete charter of trade union liberty."

The one positive recommendation had to do with the protection of union funds and property. In this regard Harrison proposed a detailed scheme of legislative reform by which the unions would enjoy the benefits of the Friendly Societies' Acts, including protection against unscrupulous officers, and the privileges of summary remedies against fraud and embezzlement, but not be open to suit. As J. M. Ludlow, Registrar of Friendly Societies, put it at the time of the Taff Vale Case, Harrison's provisions secured the unions full protection for their funds "without giving any corresponding hold on the unions themselves."[73] The skill with which Harrison devised these arrangements was praised by the Webbs who saw in them "a striking instance of the advantage to a labour movement of expert professional advice."[74]

The results of the Royal Commission's labours seem clear. First, the long investigation and the reports issued by the Commission were of vital importance in bringing about a great change in public opinion with regard to combinations. J. S. Mill, who publicly identified himself with Harrison's Report, noted the change in a letter of June, 1869, written in support of the trade union bill of that year.

> I have been happy to observe that the indiscriminate prejudice against trade unions which had been so much stimulated by the atrocious crimes brought home to the officers of a few of them by the inquiries of the Royal Commission has been greatly corrected by the general results of those inquiries. . . .[75]

Union leaders were of the same opinion. The speeches of Potter and others at the Trades Union Congress of 1869[76] made it plain that they felt their standing with the public had been greatly improved by the work of the Commission and it is certain that they shared Mill's conviction that "the minority report of the Commission has been especially useful in promoting sound views on the subject."

The change in public opinion may be observed in the House of Commons and in *The Times*. The attitude *The Times* had held towards the unions on the eve of the Commission was most unfavourable.[77] Editorials as late as March, 1869, on the Reports of the Commissioners were still far from friendly to the union cause; but by July they had altered their tone. A leader of July 8[78] pointed to the great change that had come over public opinion with regard to unions in

[73]J. M. Ludlow to an unknown correspondent, Sept. 1901. Made available by N. Masterman, Ludlow's biographer. [74]Webbs, *History of Trade Unions*, 254.
[75]*BeeHive*, June 26, 1869, 5e–f. [76]*Ibid.*, Aug. 28, 1869, 7b.
[77]E.g., July 3, 1867, 5f. [78]July 8, 1869, 8e–f.

recent months, a change best evidenced, they thought, by the sympathetic and enlightened reception the House of Commons had given to Harrison's trade union bill when introduced by Hughes the day before. The change in the attitude of the House was not, *The Times* went on to argue, the result of political pressure; nor was it the outcome of the new franchise. Rather it was the result of the Commission's labours. The reception of the bill, "speaks volumes for the effect of an impartial and exhaustive inquiry. The change which has come over opinion on the labour question, both in and out of Parliament, is mainly if not wholly, due to greater knowledge and wider experience." The leader concluded with the remark that it was not "restraint of trade" but rather keeping unions beyond the protection of the law which was contrary to public policy.

> Trade unions will continue to exist, and to number half a million members, whether they are protected by Act of Parliament or not. True statesmanship will seek neither to augment nor to reduce their influence, but accepting it as a fact will give it free scope for legitimate development.

Second, the trade union movement was re-united and re-vitalized by Harrison's Report and programme of reform. The old rivalry between the Junta of Applegarth, Allan and company on the one hand and George Potter and the provincial unionists under whom the Trades Union Congress had begun on the other, was put aside when all sections found in the Minority Report a common programme for political action. The Conference of Amalgamated Trades and the London Trades Council gave the Report and its proposals their endorsement at a delegate meeting of unions held at the Bell Inn, April 21, 1869,[79] and the Trades Union Congress in its sessions of that year passed a series of resolutions which embodied Harrison's proposals and made them the official legislative programme of the whole union movement.[80] The first steps in what was to prove one of the best organized and most successful of nineteenth-century lobbies were taken at once. The Trade Union Bill of 1869, drafted by Harrison and embodying the largest part of his reform plan, was immediately put before parliament and pressed upon it by all the resources of the union movement.[81] By 1875 the entire "charter of trade union liberties" had been carried into the statute book and it may therefore be claimed that the Minority Report ranks as one of the most important documents in the history of British trade unionism and as a milestone in the history of labour.

[79] *BeeHive*, April 24, 1869, 5c–e.
[80] *Short History of the London Trades Council, by a Delegate* (London, 1935), 9.
[81] See F. Harrison, "The Trade Union Bill," *Fortnightly Review*, July, 1869, 30–45.

THE MEANING AND STRUCTURE OF *PIPPA PASSES*

MARGARET ELEANOR GLEN

BROWNING'S *Pippa Passes* is in general remembered for two lines,

> God's in his heaven,
> All's right with the world;

and these two lines are usually quoted out of context. For this there is, perhaps, some excuse, since *Pippa Passes* presents a problem that is at once a problem of meaning and of structure. The poem is systematically built. It opens with Pippa's monologue in which the delightful little silk-winder of Asolo revels in this, her one free day of the year, and exuberantly pictures herself in the role of each of the town's four "Happiest Ones" in turn. Four major scenes follow, showing us these "Happiest Ones" in actuality, each at a time of crisis. There is Ottima, who has just incited her lover Sebald to the murder of her wealthy old husband, Luca Gaddi. There is the art student Jules, in ectasy over his new bride Phene, as yet unaware that his marriage has been contrived as a spiteful "jest" by unscrupulous fellow-students. There is Luigi, the fiery young Italian patriot, too enthusiastic in his determination to assassinate the Austrian ruler, and his mother, anxious to dissuade him from his scheme, unaware that to stay in Asolo means death. Finally there is the aged bishop, scheming to recover his dead brother's fortune from a cheating Intendant, ignorant that an heiress already exists in Pippa. Linking the major scenes are three short "talks by the way" which present the background intrigue and show us the students plotting against Jules, the police against Luigi, and the Intendant's tools, Bluphocks and the poor girls, against Pippa herself. Throughout these scenes Pippa is never seen, but her passing song causes a radical change in each crisis. In the closing monologue she reviews her day, quite unconscious of her decisive influence.

Superficially the pattern is simple enough, but the obvious problem is one of unity. Is there one basic theme, one thread of meaning connecting the different episodes? If so, what is it? Or can the four major scenes be divorced from the framework? In the latter event, the drama simply falls apart and, despite the merits of the individual scenes, the poem as a whole is a failure. Conventional interpretation has proved this to be more than a hypothetical problem. The Ottima-Sebald scene, for instance, is often singled out, without regard for the underlying theme of the whole poem, as the one in which Browning excelled.

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The talks by the way are usually ignored or treated as necessary aids to the plot with little relation to the poem's meaning. The significance of the prologue and conclusion is forgotten and even the character of Pippa herself suffers.

If this is a "framework" poem in which the frame only exists to set off the picture, it is a most unusual example. For one thing, the frame, including the prologue, conclusion, and talks by the way, is nearly as extensive as the picture in sheer bulk of lines alone. Moreover, Pippa is part of the frame and her character is developed more than any other, certainly far more than that of a traditional "deus ex machina." What is, then, the theme of *Pippa Passes*, the one thread of meaning which knits monologues, four episodes, and talks by the way into a meaningful unity?

Obviously Pippa is the unifying factor, for the poem begins and ends with her, and she appears, or at least is heard, in every scene. Her lyrics effect a vital charge in each of Asolo's four "Happiest Ones" and her remarkable character is the foil for all the others. Pippa is a delightful creature, so delightful in fact that she bewitches many of her readers into forgetting that she is anything more. She is far too often treated more as a fairy than as a human being, because of an undue emphasis upon her lyric outbursts. But her real humanity, as well as her complexity, becomes apparent in her first speech and more especially in her last. Browning's suggestive depiction of Pippa, with all her sweetness that does not turn her into a Pollyanna, her shrewdness and humour, represents one of the triumphs of his narration. Indeed, his suggestiveness in presenting all his characters is notable, for in a comparatively short scene he is able to bring alive in its entirety the essence of a character. Part of this success is due to the fact that he chooses a decisive instant, involving conflict which by its very nature will bring out character. But his shades of interpretation, his sensitivity to complex motivation, and his compression are what account primarily for the vividness of his characterization.

The characters, however, and even Pippa herself, are subsidiary, or rather integral, to the underlying theme, and unless the narrative brings out this theme, it is purposeless. If we examine the text, it is evident that the clue to its interpreation lies with Pippa, and if we examine her lines, we see that her New Year's hymn presents a theme which underlies the whole poem. Its importance is obvious, for it is impossible to be unaware (considering it at the simplest level) of the ironic light which it casts over the poem. Moreover, if we have forgotten it by the end of the poem, it is recalled and emphasized by a repetition of three of its lines, and the whole poem is illuminated by its meaning. The hymn reads:

All service ranks the same with God:
If now, as formerly He trod
Paradise, his presence fills
Our earth, each only as God wills
Can work—God's puppets, best and worst,
Are we; there is no last nor first.

Say not 'a small event!' Why 'small'?
Costs it more pain that this, ye call
A 'great event,' should come to pass,
Than that? Untwine me from the mass
Of deeds which make up life, one deed
Power shall fall short in, or exceed!

In other words, God is working out His purposes as He wills through men whether they strive for or against these purposes. Men are in the hands of God, be they conscious or unconscious of it. As Paracelsus says,

do your best
Or worst, praise rises, and will rise for ever,

or as Browning later writes, in *A Death in the Desert*,

Man is not God, but hath God's end to serve.

Every event would prove as significant as another, as complex and as influential, if we looked at life not from our limited viewpoint but from God's. It is foolish to suppose that God is somehow less present, or "falls short," in what we term a "small event." We must not, of course, disconnect the second stanza of the hymn from the first. It is easy to say that *Pippa Passes* shows how seemingly unimportant happenings often have a significance which is unknown to us. It is easier still to make a moral tale of the poem and advocate constant gaiety in case we may influence others simply by chance. But this is hardly Browning's meaning, for any conception of Pippa's merely influencing people by chance is quite opposed to this hymn. It is not at all through chance that she sings just the right song at the right moment; it is through God's working out of His will. Just as in *Paracelsus* reference is made to God from whom "all power Proceeds," so here in the hymn, "power" is an attribute of God and it is His power which neither falls short nor exceeds. It is true that Mrs. Orr writes of the origin of the poem, "Mr. Browning was walking alone, in a wood near Dulwich, when the image flashed upon him of someone walking thus alone through life; one apparently too obscure to leave a trace of his or her passage, yet exercising a lasting though unconscious influence at every step of it; and the image shaped itself into the little silk-winder of Asolo, Filippa or Pippa." But in his execution Browning has deepened this first conception and given it a third dimension, as it

were, by having Pippa's "lasting though unconscious influence" part of the plan of God.

When Paracelsus affirms that God is not in any way dependent on man's efforts, Festus mistakes his meaning and concludes that men

> should lie down
> Content as God had made them, nor go mad
> In thriveless cares to better what is ill.

But Paracelsus rejects this theory of passivity, which stems from taking the doctrine of the sovereignty of God for fatalism, and insists that activity and perseverance represent the proper attitude. Perhaps in Pippa's hymn the use of the word "puppets" is unfortunate; certainly Browning did not hold the fatalistic conceptions which such a word brings to mind (cf. his attack on these conceptions in *Caliban upon Setebos* and *Andrea del Sarto*). It is necessary to remember that although each works only as God wills, man is still to be about his Father's business. If this is not borne in mind, there is a temptation to conceive of Pippa as a passive "puppet" who simply by existing at all effects marvellous changes. Her role is diminished and she is robbed of her real significance and humanity. To make man into a pawn is, after all, to make him inhuman, and that is what is often done to Pippa. Chesterton comes close to this when he asserts that man performs good through what he does, woman through what she is. This is only true to Browning if we realize that real being for him implies doing, not a passive state of vegetation. Pippa does things; she thinks and imagines with some penetration and force about the nature of love, and she praises God; she goes out to seek her happiness and during the day, as we find in the last part, exercises her judgment.

Three questions of meaning are raised by the poem—the meaning of the four incidents, the meaning of the talks by the way, and the meaning of the prologue and conclusion. Perhaps Browning's power to bring alive this narrative may be comprehended best by going through the poem.

The opening scene presents Pippa herself, anticipates the structure of the poem, provides some obvious irony through the discrepancy between Pippa's view and the true one, and, most important, gives the poem's basic theme. Pippa begins with an invocation to her one Day of the year, which is filled with the joyous vitality and playful humour so characteristic of her:

> My Day, if I squander such labour or leisure,
> Then shame fall on Asolo, mischief on me!
> Thy long blue solemn hours serenely flowing. . .

The flow and lift of the lines convey Pippa's essential serenity as well as her present exultation. It is probably her zest for life, which is no hungry search for intensity of experience in itself but a natural rejoicing which springs from a basic peace, that makes Pippa so attractive. Hers is the joy of the lyric without the self-conscious, sometimes frantic, attempt to grasp elemental emotion. She has a child-like spontaneity, and yet is not childish.

Her imagination is both fertile and vivid, and after her invocation, she pictures the four "Happiest Ones." Browning thus presents his tentative plan for the scenes to follow. Her first pictures are shot through with quick, heavy touches of irony. The very title "Four Happiest Ones" illustrates this, as does the comment concerning Luigi and his mother, who are supposedly unmatched in "true content,"

> The cheerful town, warm, close,
> And safe . . .
> Receives them!

But Pippa shows a shrewd power of discrimination when she in fancy chooses her lot. Any factory-girl at the silk-mills might know from the town gossip that all did not run smoothly at the owner, Luca Gaddi's, home. But few would concur in Pippa's final choice of sharing God's love as does Monsignor.

After reciting her hymn, Pippa comes to the correct conclusion that she is

> just as great, no doubt,
> Useful to men, and dear to God, as they!

With God "there is no last nor first," although she seems so insignificant compared with the four Happiest Ones. Browning evidently wished to make this point very clear, for there are two major revisions of this section. One expands considerably the lines which first describe Asolo's "Happiest Ones," giving them the prominence which they need and increasing the irony. (Twenty-four lines are added.) The other clarifies Pippa's conclusions from the hymn, and the expansion of meaning is evident when we read the first version:

> And more of it, and more of it—oh, yes!
> So that my passing, and each happiness
> I pass, will be alike important—prove
> That true! Oh yes—the brother,
> The bride, the lover, and the mother,—
> Only to pass whom will remove—
> Whom a mere look at half will cure
> The Past, and help me to endure
> The Coming. . . . I am just as great no doubt,
> As they!

The scene between Ottima and Sebald is by far the most dramatic, as well as the greatest possible contrast to Pippa's monologue, and was always very effective in stage performances. For those seeking impressive, striking drama, this is inevitably a favourite scene and the parallel of *Macbeth* II, 2 is often aptly suggested.

The two characters are quite distinct. The German, Sebald, though at first outwardly bold, is of finer moral fibre and less ruthless than Ottima. His nerves are the first to break and Ottima herself must steady them. His mind plays relentlessly over the past, as though he is compelled to torture himself in the hope of thus purging his soul. He can be calmed to a degree (even using a circumlocution which in Ottima so annoys him, "In spite of Luca and what's come to him"), but when Ottima grasps his hands as she would the dead man's, his panic breaks out again,

> Off, off; take your hands off mine!
> 'Tis the hot evening—off! oh, morning, is it?

On the other hand, Ottima is comparatively cool and, in the Italian tradition, quite remorseless. Her first speech shows, indeed, a petty irritability which may be the result of overwrought nerves, or an attempt by annoying him to rouse Sebald from his state of remorse.

> Nay, do I bid you?—Sebald
> It shakes the dust down on me! Why, of course
> The slide-bolt catches.—Well, are you content,
> Or must I find you something else to spoil?
> Kiss and be friends, my Sebald! Is it full morning?
> Oh, don't speak then!

She is the one in control of the scene throughout, as she tries to divert Sebald by considering the distant scene, by describing a passing monk, by fetching wine, and finally, successfully, by speaking of their first love. Sebald's words reveal that she has always been dominant—

> And I drew
> Back; put far back your face with both my hands
> Lest you should grow too full of me—your face
> So seemed athirst for my whole soul and body!

and now Ottima overpowers her lover,

> Slower, Ottima. . .
> Less vehemently! . . .
> Your breath is worse than wine. Breathe slow, speak slow!
> Do not lean on me!

She skilfully draws Sebald with her into a recollection of their former passion as the tone rises in a mounting crescendo, until he can only cry,

> Forgive me! Take not words, mere words, to heart!

He prepares to crown Ottima his very queen, "magnificent in—sin," but the last significant word never passes his lips.

Browning makes skilful use of imagery to help regulate the mood and tone. Morning and night images are contrasted and used to symbolize goodness, innocence, freshness, and evil, guilt, guile, respectively. Sebald asks,

> Morning?
> It seems to me a night with a sun added.
> Where's dew? Where's freshness?

and demands,

> Let me lean out. I cannot scent blood here,
> Foul as the morn may be.

Ottima, however, finds it a "clear morning" and her lines throughout have none of the terrible conflict which marks Sebald's. Colour, too, is used effectively. Ottima speaks of the "blood-red beam through the shutter's chink," and Sebald symbolically insists on the white wine, rejecting the black. Pippa's exquisite lyric skilfully picks up the morning imagery (the suggestion of freshness, the actual mention of "dew") from the beginning of the scene, and links it not only with innocence, but also with the very goodness of God.

Thus an utterly new factor enters as Sebald takes seriously the phrase "God's in his heaven," and there is a complete change in his thought. Ottima does not at first comprehend this change. She too sees the "little ragged girl" on the step, but ironically fancies Sebald's outbreak only another touch of panic which she can calm by mentioning the wealth of her silk-mills, a card which she has not yet played. But Sebald sees too clearly.

> I know which is the better, never fear . . .
> I see what I have done.

Ottima is pitiful in her plea,

> Speak to me—speak not of me!

She becomes, however, truly magnificent in the sudden emergence of a real and a sacrificial love. Ottima's change is even more remarkable than her lover's, for she has been the dominant ruthless partner. Her last line is indicative of her new self and is far more touching than Sebald's violent reversion.

> Not me—to him, O God, be merciful!

As in the other three major scenes, a new awareness enters with Pippa —the awareness of God and his purposes for men.

It has been claimed[1] that this "salvation" is no salvation at all, issuing as it does in a suicide and a murder (perhaps two suicides—we do not know whether Sebald stabs Ottima or whether she herself has done it when she speaks of "both deaths presently"). The Elizabethan tragic tradition, it is said, demands their deaths (cf. *Stratford, Luria*, etc.) and there is really no more salvation than in the case of Iago or Macbeth. But there is obviously a radical change of outlook at the end which neither Iago nor Macbeth shows, and in Sebald's knowing and seeing, his true perception at the last, there is surely as much "salvation" as in Paracelsus' final true perception. The charge that Ottima does not change is quite unfounded; she changes even more than Sebald, whose last words to her in a strange juxtaposition of ideas are,

I hate, hate—curse you! God's in His heaven!

although he dies upon her breast.

That Browning should place this extremely dramatic scene at the beginning of the poem rather than as a climax suggests that the effect at which he is aiming is not merely dramatic. The later scenes, while lacking this dramatic intensity, have, nevertheless, much more complexity. If this scene were preceded by the Monsignor's, for instance, how it would pale! The issues are actually extremely simple here, for the line between right and wrong is very clear.

The students' scene is a necessary prologue to the Jules-Phene episode. The necessity of having such scenes as those which precede the next three main episodes shows how much more complicated these episodes are. Moreover, these scenes provide contrast to the others, for they present the people whom Pippa does not touch. In each scene there is a reference to her and we know that she sings each time. (For instance, we hear, "So that is your Pippa, the little girl who passed us singing?") But although the students, Bluphocks, and the poor girls certainly could benefit from Pippa's influence, they remain untouched. She works, as her hymn states, only as God wills. Moreover, these characters represent some of the "worst puppets" through whom God works. It is debatable, for instance, whether Jules would ever have found his new goal in art, had not Lutwyche decided to play a "jest" on him.

Browning paints the group of six students vividly. They have one unified outlook with surface variations, and Gottlieb, the newcomer,

[1]J. M. Purcell, "The Dramatic Failure of *Pippa Passes*," *Studies in Philology*, XXXVI (1939), 77–87.

is a notable contrast. They represent something of a cult of student-hood, for which a superficial knowledge of some sort is necessary, but most of all a distinctive way of expressing clever thoughts and a firm conviction that there is nothing new under the sun (a serious hindrance to study of any kind). The greatest thing in life becomes a clever jest such as the one Lutwyche plays on Jules. Actually he does not know his fellow-artist at all, fancying that there will be need of preventing Jules from hurting his bride when the truth is discovered. The 2nd Student shows the tendency of the group to be witty at one another's expense, especially when, like Giovacchino, the victim is absent. Lutwyche is the leader of the group and has been especially annoyed by Jules' description of them as "dissolute, brutalized, heartless bunglers." He asks sardonically, "Now, is Schramm brutalized, I should like to know? Am I heartless?" and he demands speech or silence from Schramm as he wills. The latter is the second distinct character among the students. He has chosen or fallen into the role of the philosopher who dispenses wisdom when the pipe is removed from his mouth, as a music-box when the lid is removed, who is as easily silenced, and whose output is as trivial. He is the one to whom Lutwyche can appeal with a rhetorical sweep as to a final authority, "Schramm! (Take the pipe out of his mouth somebody.) Will Jules lose the bloom of his youth?" And when Schramm has produced his inconclusive generalities, Lutwyche can retort, "There, you see!"

Gottlieb (and note the literal German meaning of his name) is the newcomer who proves different. "His [Jules'] discovery of the truth will be frightful," he objects, to which the only reply is "That's the joke." "I say, you wipe off the very dew of his youth," he exclaims earnestly. Gottlieb is the only one to show any concern for Phene ("She does not also take it for earnest, I hope?") and his one feeling is "Pity—pity!" Pity and love are the very elements which are entirely lacking in the other students, although Browning would consider that complete knowledge is impossible without them. Phene put her finger on the basic wrong of what the students are doing, when she speaks of

> That hateful smirk of boundless self-conceit
> Which seems to take possession of this world
> And make of God a tame confederate,
> Purveyor to their appetites. . . .

Although

> each only as God wills
> Can work—God's puppets, best and worst
> Are we,

the students would make God Himself the servant to their will.

Ironically enough they do not realize that He is using them, and to help Jules.

The scene between Jules and Phene actually is composed of three distinct monologues in which the listener's responses are clearly indicated, but which nevertheless pursue their own themes. Jules and Phene cannot yet truly converse with each other. Jules' opening speech is touching in its joy and exhilaration, which cause him to rush on impetuously after his pleas, "speak, you!" The quick phrases, the rapid change of subject, the following of Phene's eyes about his room, and eager explanations all help convey his new-found happiness. The room and its statues come alive for us with his description as does Phene, when

> those eyes complete
> Their melancholy survey, sweet and slow,
> Of all my room holds; to return and rest
> On me with pity, yet some wonder too. . . .

Jules excitedly seizes his Homer for her to read from, and ironically chooses the words of Odysseus as he draws his first arrow on the chief treacherous suitor. He shows here a statue carved at her express command and we can picture the students' past mirth as they hit upon this trick and as they saw their statue take shape. Alarmed by her extreme pallor, Jules ends, as he began, with a plea for her not to die.

But Phene is now alive for the first time in her life. The students have not counted on her having any reaction at all, and only Gottlieb fears for the result on her soul as well as on Jules'. After all, she is only "a model he might hire by the hour," a tool not to be taken seriously. Having made God the "purveyor to their appetites," shall they not do as they please with His creatures? Pippa's hymn tells her that all God's "puppets" are of equal importance, the greatest with the least. But when the students distort this, and put themselves in place of God, the rest of the world becomes their puppet in turn. Phene has now found her soul, ironically through the actions of these, God's worst puppets, and through Jules, who in these moments has brought to life his greatest piece of work. Just as he brought alive his statues, laying bare the flesh "asleep" in the marble, so he has brought alive Phene. And just as in his creative art, so in his "creation" of Phene, he has worked, though unwittingly, "only as God wills."

Lutwyche's speech revealing his plot produces the violent effect which was anticipated, for Jules prepares to "root out all fifteen of them." Pippa's song works in a far more indirect manner than with Sebald. The effect is to bring back an awareness of God, since Jules again wishes to hear "God's voice plain" as he once heard it, but there

is no mention of God in the second song as in the first. Instead the simple ballad starts a chain of reasoning in Jules and it dawns upon him what has truly happened.

> Now, it will wake, feel, live—or die again!
> Shall to produce form out of unshaped stuff
> Be Art—and, further, to evoke a soul
> From form, be nothing? . . .
> Now, to kill Lutwyche, what would that do?—save
> A wretched dauber men will hoot to death
> Without me, from their laughter!

There is not a thunderous revulsion as with Sebald, but a subtler reaction. Jules is not performing such an obvious wrong as Sebald, for even in his anger he is kind and generous to Phene and it cannot be denied that the students deserve some punishment. Outwardly this is so, but actually he would kill not Lutwyche, who is essentially dead already, but Phene and his own new-born inspiration. The completion of this episode is only reached in the last scene.

Bluphocks is something of a parallel to the students, flippant, clever, amusing enough until we realize later what he is actually planning, and why he has been paid. His hobby, as we know already, is rhyming, with which he evidently attempts to impress the Italian girls, and plans to impress Pippa. The scene acts, as does the student scene, as an explanatory prologue to the following scene in which the issues are clear enough, but not the irony and consequences of Luigi's actions. In addition, in this scene for the first time threads of the various plots appear and are woven together. We know that Bluphocks, working for the Intendant, desires to meet Pippa and we learn that Luca Gaddi's house is still closed. As the action concerning Luigi and Pippa herself begins to unfold, the Ottima-Sebald story is already finished.

Pippa's effect on Luigi is quite distinct from her effect on Sebald and Jules, for she confirms him in a decision which he has already made, but which is weakening. We know beforehand that if he leaves on his seemingly dangerous errand, he will be safe, but if he remains (as his mother, thinking only of his safety, wishes), he will be arrested for treason. Hence it is against this background tension that the third main scene is played, just as the second is played against the background of the silent listening students. The dialogue skilfully shows the steps which Luigi's mother takes to dissuade him, steps which mark not the planned intrigue of a diplomat, but the anxious persuasiveness of mother love. Critics are not certain whether Luigi's intention to kill the ruler is wholly laudable or whether this is merely a device to save his life at the moment. But surely Pippa's song means more than the confirmation of a mistaken motive. Otherwise Luigi's cry "'Tis

God's voice calls, how could I stay?" is meaningless, since what has come to him is the conviction of the necessity of the assassination. The intensity of this conviction is shown by the urgency of Luigi's last words. Moreover, Browning was not so much concerned with preserving the lives of these characters (cf. Ottima and Sebald), as with showing the more profound inner results of Pippa's singing. When we face the fact that Pippa's song does actually lead to several deaths, we are forced to conclude that her song is destructive,[2] or that, though it achieves some result, the characters act from mistaken motives, or that we ourselves are vainly and fastidiously objecting to physical death, when there are much larger issues at stake.

Luigi's actions are concerned with the question of justice,

> I laugh at myself as through the town I walk,
> And see men merry as if no Italy
> Were suffering; then I ponder—'I am rich,
> 'Young, healthy; why should this fact trouble me,
> 'More than it troubles these?' But it does trouble!

He is instinctively aroused by the spectacle of Italy's suffering and subjection under a tyrant. But his mother cannot comprehend this. She begins by challenging his basic conviction of present injustice, asserting that it only seems unjust because of "writers for effect" and that evil is "in its nature loud." She fears that he "never will escape." Luigi here exclaims with great enthusiasm, "The dying is best part of it," and asserts that he has already had a lifetime's enjoyment of the beauties of the world. It is not only his long concentration on Nature's loveliness which causes his mother to smile to herself, "He will not go!", but also his refusal to face facts. Luigi attempts to deny that there is any sacrifice in giving up this world which he loves so well. This is so obviously false that his mother at the end has only to turn his thoughts to that part of his life which he certainly has not had enough of, and which it will be a sacrifice to give up, his Chiara. Luigi's determination has already been weakening, for he cannot even give his mother coherent reasons for the murder, and his last touch of bravado seems but a show: "Well for those who live through June!" With the mention of Chiara, he indulges in his first reminiscence and the mother's victory is all but assured, when Pippa breaks in.

Pippa certainly is no singer for effect, but she nevertheless rouses Luigi immediately. Before the song is half over, he is confirmed in his former plans and, unlike the other listeners, he twice interrupts her excitedly. After a speech only seven lines long, he leaves in haste. In

[2]A. E. Dubois, "Robert Browning, Dramatist," *Studies in Philology*, XXXIII (1936), 626–55.

the last two scenes of the poem the characters are wavering between two alternatives and the issue with all its consequences is presented before Pippa's song, so that a quick decisive denouement is possible. This contrasts with the first two scenes, in which major developments take place after the song.

The group of poor girls has no functional necessity in laying the groundwork for the following scene, but they provide a foil for Pippa and further the plot concerning her. Like the students, three are differentiated. One is a country girl who dreams of her happy childhood on the farm in contrast to the life which she now leads. Once again, suggestive nature imagery ("white blossoms"), as in the first scene, is associated with purity. The second girl is short-spoken, though not unkindly, sceptical of Zanze's claims. Zanze, the leader of the group, boasts of her conquests, mocks the country girl till she is ready to cry, flaunts her cleverness in dealing with her seducers, and is the one to tell Pippa of her "great, rich, handsome" admirer. One of the devices which Browning uses throughout his poem is that of reflecting the actions of the speakers in their words and it is especially noticeable here. Zanze becomes a vivid figure as she waves her wine-stained fingers and deliberately crushes a "sunshiny" beetle. Similarly, the first girl notices the swallow and we can see her mouth twist under Zanze's teasing and the pitiful thinness of her arm as the second girl spans it.

All three attitudes contrast with Pippa's natural joyousness; and the country girl with her pathetic delight in nature is especially appealing, for she might be another less shrewd Pippa who was enticed from her old way of life. There is an interesting pattern here in the repetition of Pippa's game of "let's pretend," but how different are these fantasies! Neither Zanze with her desire for distinctive conquests, nor the country girl with her pitiful dreams of peaceful farm life, nor the second girl who simply cannot be bothered with such games, would surely choose to be Monsignor. Pippa's choice is quite remarkable in comparison; it is neither unworthy as is Zanze's (she explicitly rejects Ottima's lot), nor mere escapism as the country girl's (she rejects Luigi's lot expressly because it is unreal for her). The scene ends with the tantalizing words, "I'll tell you all about it." Actually all the intermediate scenes are mere preparation for action which comes elsewhere (in a major scene or outside the drama altogether) and all end like a serial story just as something is about to happen.

The scene between Monsignor and the Intendant is the most complex of all the major scenes, for the two men are playing at the game of diplomatic intrigue, and hence the issues are of necessity veiled.

Monsignor appears to have the upper hand, for the Intendant attempts to evade the interview, imagining that his brief threat will be sufficient to dissuade the bishop. "If you have so intimate an acquaintance with your brother's affairs, you will be tender of turning so far back: they will hardly bear looking into, so far back." Monsignor, in turn, works on the Intendant's nerves, already frayed by the cat-and-mouse game which has been going on all evening, by calmly engaging in social small talk.

This talk serves another purpose, however, in that it completes the Jules-Phene episode as the reference to Luca Gaddi's closed house has completed the Ottima-Sebald episode. (That is, as much as any of the episodes are completed. Actually we can only anticipate the discovery of the dead in Gaddi's home, Jules' painting, the assassination of the emperor, and Pippa's attaining of a fortune.) Only here is the theme finished which began with Pippa's song and with Jules symbolically smashing his old statues. It is the theme which Browning expands in *Andrea del Sarto* again with reference to art, and which applied to life itself runs through much of his work. Monsignor quotes Jules: " 'He never had a clearly conceived Ideal within his brain till today. Yet since his hand could manage a chisel, he has practised expressing other men's Ideals; and, in the very perfection he has attained to, he foresees an ultimate failure.' " In other words, mere technique is easy enough compared with the choice of the goal, the "Ideal," which Jules has now found. If this Ideal is only that of others, we may achieve perfection, but not greatness, for we can go no further than they went. Jules has realized the paradox that in perfection there is limitation.

Finally the Intendant impatiently demands that "this farce, this chatter end now." The two men form a striking contrast, for Monsignor is even now self-possessed and deliberate in his moves, whereas the Intendant, of necessity on the defensive, is alarmed, nervous, and clumsy. When the bishop begins to press him, "By the way, Maffeo of Forli (which, I forgot to observe, is your true name), was the interdict ever taken off you for robbing that church at Cesena?" he parries too hastily, "No, nor needs be: for when I murdered your brother's friend, Pasquale, for him. . . ." The story can only be pieced together by allusion, but Monsignor's predicament is evident, although the issue is not as simple as it seems. (1) If Monsignor continues, as he has started, to seek the recovery of his brother's fortune, the Intendant has ensured that the estates will go to Pippa, thus passing out of his control. (2) Monsignor's sudden violence over the possibility of a living heir or heiress ("Liar!" he exclaims) shows both his reason

for arranging this interview and his temptation. (3) If he should free the Intendant, Pippa will be disposed of, and he will regain most of the money. (4) This very money in his own hands would buy chapels for his brothers as well as his father, would ease his conscience by helping him to redeem "whole centuries of sin." It is useless to point out that the bishop is dying and cannot use the wealth; it is not for this life that he would spend it in any case. Moreover, his own pride would be spared (since his brothers' disgraces would remain hidden), the pride on which the Intendant has been playing, and about which Pippa shrewdly remarks:

> but, all the same,
> No mere mortal has a right
> To carry that exalted air; . . .
> so there's that proud look to spare.

Chesterton objects violently to this "gross falsification of the whole beauty of *Pippa Passes*" in connecting Pippa herself with any of the episodes. At this rate, Sebald might well turn out to be her lost brother, he asserts, and Jules a former husband. But he is assuming beforehand that the theme of the poem should be Pippa's unconscious and chance influence on others, whereas the text, although fully developing the irony of the situation, implies that the influence is not at all by chance, unconscious though it be:

> each only as God wills
> Can work—God's puppets, best and worst
> Are we. . . .

If this is the theme, there can be no substantial objection to the pattern which Browning creates. Indeed, the irony is increased by having the very person whom Pippa chose to be, tempted to plot her own destruction. Furthermore, Pippa is already related to another story if Chesterton will be absolutely strict; she is the employee of Luca Gaddi, owner of Asolo's silk-mills.

In the last scene we are back with Pippa again and the pattern is complete. The picture of Pippa is expanded here and new qualities become apparent. As she enters with her variation of the fable of the ant and the grasshopper, it is evident that she has seen through Zanze's tales and that ironically she had no need of Monsignor to protect her. Pippa's innocence does not automatically imply helplessness. Her shrewdness becomes apparent,

> No foreigner, that I can recollect,
> Came, as she says, a month since, to inspect
> Our silk-mills,

and a human capacity for anger (on being told her shoes were like canoes!: "How pert that girl was!") As in the first scene, her simple remarks have an ironic significance:

> Well, if old Luca keeps his good intents
> We shall do better: see what next year brings!

Browning neatly trims off the different threads of his story, for Pippa quite naturally passes on to Monsignor and the clatter in his house, remarking with insight his "proud look." Again, the reaction to Luigi's hasty departure is sketched. Browning throughout the poem uses the device of looking at each of the four "Happiest Ones" from different points of view. This not only enables him to interweave and to advance the four plots, but also adds to the irony according to how well the observer is informed.

Once again, with the return to Pippa, Browning returns to rhyme. He has used three modes of expression—prose, blank verse, and rhymed verse—and each mode gives to its scene a distinctive tone. Prose is used in scenes of intrigue (the student scene, the Bluphocks scene, the Monsignor-Intendant scene) so as to render the details of the respective plots quite clear, and to express glib humour and sarcasm. Lutwyche and Bluphocks would not appear nearly so despicable if they were given the dignity of poetic expression. (Both express themselves deplorably in poetry cf. Phene's recitation and Bluphocks' doggerel.) Pippa alone speaks rhymed verse, and this gives to her lines as a whole a musical quality absent elsewhere. The lyric beauty of her songs appears to carry over into her everyday speech, or rather to arise naturally from it.

Pippa is on the whole disappointed with her day, for the promise of her New Year's hymn seems unfulfilled. At the last Browning makes his irony very obvious with Pippa's simple notion of her own possible influence,

> For instance, if I wind
> Silk tomorrow, my silk may bind
> And broider Ottima's cloak's hem,

and by her disappointment which prevents her from praying any more than "God bless me!" The hymn had not warned her not to expect any sign of her influence, and like many of God's puppets, she seeks for one and is puzzled at its absence, "I passed by them all, and felt no sign." Pippa has not thought of the basic assumption underlying the words,

> each only as God wills
> Can work—God's puppets, best and worst
> Are we; there is no last nor first,

which is that God works in mysterious ways. Men obviously do classify their fellows as best and worst, as first and last, while before God, according to the hymn, all men are of equal importance. There is an evident conflict in these views: men do not look at themselves as God does, because His ways of looking at them are foreign to them and to a point hidden from them. It takes faith to be a servant of God and not to seek, like the mystic "who has not the patience to wait on God,"[3] for a sign. It is this mysteriousness and lack of a sign which is the basis of the deepest irony of the poem, for the irony primarily used here is the "contradictory outcome of events as if in mockery of the promise and fitness of things" (*OED*). This very "contradictory outcome" is, however, the theme of the poem itself, so that the irony is of basic significance. The irony of Pippa's lines, for instance, arises from the difference between her simple view and the true one. Similarly, the deeper irony that the "little girl who passed us singing" should break down the schemes of Ottima, of the students, of Luigi's mother, and of the Intendant, is due to the difference between the theme of Pippa's New Year's hymn and the common opinion that there are greater and lesser events and greater and lesser men. In a sense, the theme which Browning presents so suggestively in his narrative is simply the irony of God's ways when regarded from man's point of view.

[3]Kierkegaard, *Journals*, trans. A. Dru (London, 1938).

REVIEWS

BRETT'S *HISTORY OF PSYCHOLOGY* REVISED* C. R. MYERS

When volume I of George Sidney Brett's *History of Psychology* first appeared a little over forty years ago (1912), it was immediately recognized as a literary and scholarly production of the first rank. It provided a comprehensive survey of "ancient and patristic" thinking on all matters psychological, and did so in a way that was authoritative, detached, vigorous, and readable.

Looking back over nearly half a century of growth and expansion in psychology, this contribution to the literature seems to have been peculiarly timely and appropriate. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, mother-philosophy had given birth to yet another science and had nurtured it through infancy and childhood. Then at a period of adolescent turmoil and rebellion, when the "new psychology" was trying so hard to establish its own independence, Brett, the philosopher-historian, provided for it an invaluable "coming-of-age" gift—the full story of its own ancestry.

When volumes II and III of the work appeared about a decade later (1921), they, too, were acclaimed for the same qualities which had distinguished the first. Typical are the comments of one contemporary reviewer: "The style has distinction and clearness with frequent flashes of humour. . . . It is easy to read in spite of the unavoidable tediousness of some of the topics. . . . The whole work is remarkably fresh, vivid and attractively written . . . by one who has the scholarship, science and philosophical training that are requisite for the task."[1]

Today, there is nothing to alter in such an appraisal. There have been other histories of psychology with a sharper focus on the recent past which, for a narrow domestic purpose, have been more useful and more used. But none has even attempted what Brett achieved. His *History* is a classic and it stands alone.

It is this monumental three-volume philosopher's history of psychology that has recently been subject to "revision" in the form of radical plastic surgery. The operation has been performed by R. S. Peters, a lecturer in the Departments of Philosophy and Psychology at Birbeck College, University of London. A large number of incisions have been made and nearly half of the original underlying

**Brett's History of Psychology.* Edited and abridged by R. S. PETERS. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd.; New York: The Macmillan Company [Toronto: Thomas Nelson & Sons (Canada) Limited]. 1953. Pp. 742.

[1]Review by "J.L.M." in *Mind*, N.S., XXXI (1922), 525.

tissue has been removed. Many interesting but obscure wrinkles have been smoothed away. The familiar features which were kept have been somewhat rearranged. An attempt has been made to cover some of the incision scars with skin grafts in the form of "introductory" and "bridge" passages. The final section of the original has been amputated and replaced by an elaborate prosthetic device. The result of this operation is one large, tidy volume called "*Brett's History of Psychology.*"

It is difficult for a former student of Professor Brett's to wax enthusiastic about this Reader's Digest treatment of a sacred classic. It is even difficult to view it with the equanimity and detachment for which Brett himself was noted. And yet the least that can be said in its favour is that, if it had to be done at all, the result might have been much worse!

In the first place, the surgeon-editor in this case is to be commended for his decision *not* to attempt to rewrite or paraphrase or abstract the original. What we have left of Brett in this volume (and it is a substantial amount) is at least *Brett*—and for this we should be thankful.

The editor's purpose was to correct what he calls "certain obvious defects" in the original. The first, he says, is its unwieldy bulk. This he has set about correcting on the principle that half a loaf is better than no bread. If one grants the principle, there is little point in criticizing his decisions on what to retain and what to omit. It may be deplorable but it is probably true that few students can, or ever could, really cope with the eleven hundred pages of Brett in the original. It remains to be seen, of course, whether they can even cope with the six hundred pages we have left in this abridgment. If so, they will unquestionably be the better for it—and the editor will have achieved one of his two stated aims.

The other purpose seems to this reviewer less justifiable and less likely to be achieved. The second "defect" the editor undertook to correct was that Brett's volumes "do not carry the student much beyond the beginning of the twentieth century." This was corrected by adding, at the end, Peters' own lengthy sketch called "Twentieth Century Trends."

It is true, of course, that Brett did not attempt to carry the student far into the present century. But why should he? Having carried him so far across so many centuries, Brett was properly content to leave him on the threshold of the present where Boring and Murphy and others would, in due course, take up the difficult task of contemporary historical guide.

Peters too might well have added a useful and provocative volume to this growing shelf. He writes clearly, and what he has to say is both

sprightly and stimulating. But, by the very nature of things, it does not fit well under Professor Brett's coat-tails. It does not match either the detachment or the sweep of his treatment. Indeed, there is not yet room for Brett's kind of perspective in viewing the contemporary scene.

The editor is disarmingly modest when he says in the Preface that this addition of his own may appear to many "like the Festival of Britain skylon sticking out of the Crystal Palace." Unfortunately, the analogy is rather too apt. The skylon is not trivial. It is simply out of place.

It remains for teachers of psychology to capitalize on the new availability of a classic. Here is a Student's Shorter Edition of Brett's *History of Psychology*. And the truth of what John Beare[2] said about it in 1913 becomes more impressive with every passing year: "The psychologist who pursues his subject on merely modern lines may achieve excellent results; yet, if ignorant of the work of his predecessors, and especially the Greeks, he is too often betrayed into waste of time and a false opinion of his own originality."

SIXTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLISH LITERATURE* H. S. WILSON

Professor C. S. Lewis's contribution to the "Oxford History of English Literature" is learned, brilliantly written, and provocative, as was to be expected. Its position as one of the most readable among historical studies of English literature is assured—if, indeed, it may properly be described as a "history" in any strict sense, for all its substantial proportions. The author has been at some pains to explain his critical method, which is intended to avoid, in so far as possible, a schematization that is too diagrammatically neat to fit the facts and that will allow him to include all the varying currents of literary thought and expression in sixteenth-century England. He surveys these currents in his opening chapter entitled "New Learning and New Ignorance," a masterly account which is full of fresh and stimulating insights. For the remainder of his book, Professor Lewis eschews the term "Renaissance" as a misleading or empty generalization.He supplies his own terms of analysis, dividing the literature studied into "Late Medieval," "Drab," and "Golden." The two latter designations, he insists, are not invidiously intended—"drab" is not necessarily

[2]John I. Beare in a review of Brett's *History of Psychology, Mind*, XXII (1913), 277.

*_*English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, excluding Drama.* By C. S. LEWIS. Oxford History of English Literature, ed. F. P. Wilson and Bonamy Dobrée, volume III. Oxford, at the Clarendon Press [Toronto: Oxford University Press]. 1954. Pp. viii, 696. $6.00.

dyslogistic nor "golden" eulogistic. Nevertheless, it is hard to discover how the "drab" literature, which extends through the mid period of the century, is anything but clumsy, jejune, or, at best, soberly neat, as Professor Lewis judges it. The very qualified praise of Wyatt and Surrey does little to counterbalance the severe strictures upon the rest of the contributors to Tottel's *Miscellany*, upon *The Mirror for Magistrates* and most of the early Elizabethan translators; and only the more judicious estimates of the achievement of Tyndale and his Tudor successors in the translation of the Bible and of the makers of the English Prayer Book go any way to support Professor Lewis's contention that "drab," in his critical usage, means very much more than "cheerless and dull," as the dictionary has it.

Nor does the author attempt to explain how or why the "drab" literature gave place to the "golden." With the advent of Sidney and Spenser (p. 65),

> men have at last learned how to write; for a few years nothing more is needed than to play out again and again the strong, simple music of the uncontorted line and to load one's poem with all that is naturally delightful—with flowers and swans, with ladies' hair, hands, lips, breasts, and eyes, with a silver and gold, woods and waters, the stars, the moon and the sun. Prose does not become Golden so suddenly as verse; many of its Golden triumphs were in the following century. It is, of course, neither possible nor desirable that a Golden Age should last long. Honey cloys and men seek for drier and more piquant flavours. At the end of the century this is already beginning to happen. The whole process of poetry from its Golden to its more sophisticated condition could be exemplified from Shakespeare's work alone.

This remarkable transformation is left unaccounted for. The incidence of genius, we are reminded, is inexplicable; and the harmonies that have pleased one generation of writers give place to the more intricate patterns and discords of their successors, "of course."

The chief reason why this causally unconnected way of looking at the literature of the Elizabethans appeals to Professor Lewis seems to be that he does not like the humanists or approve of their influence. He holds them strictly accountable for all the excesses and weaknesses of the literature, especially of the "drab" age; but "all the facts seem consistent with the view that the great literature of the fifteen-eighties and nineties was something which humanism, with its unities and *Gorboducs* and English hexameters, would have prevented if it could, but failed to prevent because the high tide of native talent was then too strong for it" (p. 19). When he admits the shaping influence of classical precedents upon the great Elizabethans, as he is sometimes obliged to do, he sees this influence as a "veil" which the humanists

imposed between themselves and the real virtues of the ancients (p. 518), or as a virulent disease (p. 159) from the fatal effects of which the major work of Sidney and Spenser, Hooker and Campion was happily immune, one presumes by a kind of literary inoculation which for lesser writers did not "take."

This extraordinary prejudice colours Professor Lewis's criticism throughout his book. But if we allow for its diffractive properties, his study is nevertheless full of the most attractive lights. The author's more sympathetic understanding of medieval literature makes his chapter on the close of the Middle Ages in Scotland the best treatment we are likely to get for a long time of the Scottish Chaucerians, whom Professor Lewis shows good reason for deriving not simply from Chaucer but from the tradition of *The Romance of the Rose* and the "Grands Rhétoriqueurs" of the fifteenth century. Even where Professor Lewis is evidently biased, he writes with unfailing wit; and he is as provocative and entertaining in his disapproval of Barclay's *Ship of Fools*, the minor poems of Spenser (*Epithalamion* excepted, he has very little use for them), or Chapman's Homer, as he is illuminating in his more judicious appraisals of More and Tyndale, *The Faerie Queene*, or *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*. His concluding comment upon the prose style of Hooker (pp. 462–3), unfortunately too long for quotation here, is itself as fine an example of critical prose in our day as one could wish for.

Despite Professor Lewis's deficient sympathy with the earlier Tudor literature in general and the aims of the humanists in particular, his critical analysis serves well enough to indicate in broad outline the way in which the prevailing discipline of humanistic education prepared and shaped the rich achievements of the end of the sixteenth century in the poetry of Sidney and Spenser, the prose of Hooker, and the drama of the University Wits and Shakespeare—though the last of these lies outside the province of Professor Lewis's study. It was the humanists' insistence upon the disciplining of literary form in the light of classical and continental humanistic precedent that produced, in the earlier Tudor literature, the effects that Professor Lewis finds "drab." The humanist reaction from the prolix, shapeless, and yet luxuriantly adorned style typically represented by John Lydgate in the fifteenth century or Stephen Hawes at the beginning of the sixteenth, made possible the formal neatness and fostered the often jejune imitations of classical and Italian models in Tottel's *Miscellany* at the insistence of humanists like Cheke and Thomas Wilson that English should be written "pure"—that it, that it should be idiomatic and freed from the extravagances of aureation and inkhornism—or of

Roger Ascham that it should conform, within the limits of decorum, to the example of the best classical models. The earlier Tudor humanists were the pioneers and teachers who prepared the way for the great Elizabethans; Erasmus, More and Elyot, Cheke, Ascham, Wilson, and many another humanist teacher prepared the way for Spenser and Hooker and Shakespeare. It required more than a full generation, from Sir Thomas Elyot's *Governor* (1531), let us say, to Sir Thomas North's Plutarch (1579), to perfect the disciplined richness of humanistic prose style that culminates in Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity*; but it was a continuous and ordered development, in which the influence of the Ciceronian tradition of humanistic prose is paramount. The humanistic "imitation" of the ancients was by no means a constraint, as Prosessor Lewis constantly assumes; rather, it was conceived as an emulation, an attempt to rival, or even surpass, in the English vernacular, the highest achievements of the ancients, as Richard Mulcaster, Spenser's schoolmaster, makes clear in his *Elementaire* (1582), and as Spenser and his greater disciple in the humanist succession, Milton, illustrate in *The Faerie Queene* and *Paradise Lost*; as Ben Jonson likewise indicates in his tribute to Shakespeare, and as Shakespeare and Jonson himself abundantly exemplify, in their very different ways, throughout their plays and poems.

This major line of literary development Professor Lewis has chosen deliberately to disregard, though he is well aware that in doing so he is departing from the commonly accepted view. There is, no doubt, something to be said for so vigorous a challenge of orthodoxy: it will put other critics upon their mettle to justify their belief in the humanist movement as an efficient and formal cause of excellence in sixteenth-century literature; but Professor Lewis's view is likely to prove a stumbling block to less seasoned students who come to his "history" expecting judicious guidance in their initial efforts to understand the course of literary development in sixteenth-century England. They will be entertained and often most happily instructed by the vivid strokes of wit in Professor Lewis's admirable style, as when, for instance, it is observed of the endless succession of sonnets and sonnet sequences (p. 498): "Enough has, I hope, been said, to guard the reader from supposing that the *corpus* of sonnets contains only frigid conceits. The truth is almost exactly the opposite. Critics reading them, as they were never meant to be read, hastily and in bulk, are gorged and satiated with beauty, as a fish can be choked by holding its head upstream. The water is good water, but there is too much of it for the fish." But the uninitiated should also be warned by Professor

Lewis's critical bias, which leaves a major part of his undertaking—the contribution of humanism in shaping English literature in the sixteenth century—still to be satisfactorily traversed.

BROAD MINDED PHILOSOPHY* T. A. GOUDGE

Contemporary philosophers can for the most part be divided into two groups. There are those whose thought is clear and precise but whose range of interests is narrow; and there are those whose interests are synoptic but whose thought is woolly. C. D. Broad, until recently Knightbridge Professor of Moral Philosophy at the University of Cambridge, is one of the few persons who has succeeded in combining breadth of outlook with lucid, accurate, and responsible thought. For more than forty years he has discussed effectively a wide variety of topics in his published work. These topics extend all the way from the philosophy of science, epistemology, and ethics to the philosophy of mind, natural theology, and psychical research. Much of his work, however, is in the form of essays which have become rather inaccessible. A representative selection of them, such as the present volume provides, is therefore extremely welcome.

Broad's way of doing philosophy is akin to that of Locke and Hume. Like them, he has not attempted to construct a metaphysical system in the grand manner. But at the same time, although he lived for several decades behind the Wittgensteinian iron curtain, he has remained unconverted to the view that metaphysical statements are devoid of meaning. Broad's method has been to take up various traditional philosophic problems, to analyse each of them with great thoroughness and subtlety, and to seek for solutions which will be in accord with the demands of logical argument and empirical evidence. The result, if not always soul-stirring, has generally thrown valuable light on the problems and cleared up a number of long-standing muddles.

The present volume contains some excellent illustrations of this method. The opening essay, for example, is a long, careful discussion of the relevance of psychical research to philosophy. Unlike most of his academic colleagues, who brush off the subject as mere quackery, Broad has taken a serious interest in alleged paranormal occurrences. He is a former president of the Society for Psychical Research, and

*_Religion, Philosophy and Psychical Research: Selected Essays._ By C. D. BROAD. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd. [Toronto: British Book Service (Canada) Ltd.]. 1953. Pp. viii, 308. $5.00.

while holding that office, delivered an address on "Normal Cognition, Clairvoyance and Telepathy," which is reprinted here. Broad repeatedly declares that before dogmatically rejecting the claims of psychical researchers, philosophers ought to look into the evidence adduced to support those claims. For even if only a minute fraction of the evidence turns out to be genuine, the consequences for philosophy will be momentous. He himself considers that the experimental results of Dr. Soal in England and Professor Rhine in the United States show that various forms of paranormal cognition do take place. He also remarks: "for my own part, I have no doubt that telepathy among normal human beings happens from time to time" (p. 27). Beyond this he is not prepared to go at the moment, though he thinks that with regard to the alleged evidence for human survival after death, philosophers ought to keep an open mind. The attitude to psychical research taken by two philosophers, Immanuel Kant and Henry Sidgwick, is presented in a pair of interesting essays which complete the first section of the book.

There follows a group of essays which investigate certain classical topics in natural theology. The titles of the essays are: "The Validity of Belief in a Personal God," "Arguments for the Existence of God," "Bishop Butler as a Theologian," and "The Present Relations of Science and Religion." All four are models of lucid, reasoned discussion. Professor Broad is himself a non-Christian and a non-theist. But he is quite unemotional and objective in setting forth his arguments, and rejects both Christian and theistic doctrines on purely philosophical grounds. The findings of the empirical sciences, while they enter into the picture, are never espoused uncritically or given more than their due weight. Indeed, he holds "that there are not many points at which the results of science and the doctrines peculiar to Christianity come into close enough contact for either conflict or co-operation between them to be possible" (p. 226). If natural theology had not fallen on such evil days, one might hope to see a counter-argument on these matters put forward by a Christian theist, for Professor Broad has certainly done an impressive job in stating the case for heterodoxy.

The last section of the book is made up of two essays on the subject of politics, "War Thoughts in Peace Time" and "Fallacies in Political Thinking." The former of these was originally given as a lecture in 1931, and is concerned with the pros and cons of pacificism. The essay has been provided with an appendix entitled "Afterthoughts in Time of Cold War," which brings the discussion up to date. In general the intellectual quality of these essays seems inferior to that of the

others in the book. Too often we are confronted with Professor Broad's opinions instead of logical arguments. Strong feelings accompany these opinions, so that the tone in which they are presented tends to be strident. Even the humour, which elsewhere is so piquant, is here rather heavy-handed. Broad takes a gloomy view of the prospects of civilization. "I do not pretend to think," he says, "that there is more than a slender chance of avoiding a third world war" (p. 27). But no reasons are given for this opinion; and the hopeful possibilities inherent in the existence of the United Nations are not even mentioned in a footnote. One is inclined to think that if a more objective attitude to the problem had been taken, the gloom might not have been so thick. However, in this case, the gloom is located amid the encircling light shed by other parts of Broad's philosophy.

DYLAN THOMAS PARAPHRASED* — MILLAR MACLURE

Although this is a small book, it contains a prefatory poem, six chapters of commentary by Professor Olson, an appendix of prose paraphrases of poems, a glossary, a bibliography (useful but premature) by William H. Huff, fourteen pages of notes on the commentary, and an index of poems cited, by Mrs. R. S. Crane. The result is infinite messiness in a little room. But I suppose this is to be expected in what is essentially a book of annotations, a key to certain difficulties in the poems of Dylan Thomas.

We have been so glutted with the legend of the alcoholic bard, pride of the BBC, wonder of his friends, scourge of the seminars, glory of the Welsh, that it is a relief to turn to Professor Olson's sober pages, where the poems are considered as artefacts and not as noises, and the reader is not distracted by irrelevant anecdote and fruitless conjecture. Poet and poems stand still here to be examined—too still, perhaps. The "New Critics," whom Professor Olson abominates and cannot help attacking even here (see pp. 61–2), at least treat a poem as if it were alive and might bite them. Professor Olson, unhappily, treats it as if it were a palimpest containing some fragments of a pseudo-Aristotelian treatise on metaphor. This is a technical fault, not an error of taste, for he admires his subject. He praises Thomas's achievement at every turn, takes all the poems seriously, and decides, rather pontifically, that this poet is worthy of transmission to posterity. Furthermore, for the reader who is interested in getting a grip, so to speak, on the poems of Dylan Thomas, this book offers many helpful

*_The Poetry of Dylan Thomas._ By ELDER OLSON. With a Bibliography by WILLIAM H. HUFF. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press [Toronto: The University of Toronto Press]. 1954. Pp. viii, 164. $3.25.

clues to understanding the language, the structural patterns, and some of the special symbolism of the poems. There are some general critical judgments of real merit scattered through the first five chapters, evidence that Professor Olson could have done an integrated and cogent piece of criticism on Thomas, had he so chosen. Here he has limited himself to producing a primer of categories and a classification of rhetorical devices. It is unfortunate that his tone is so firm, his confidence in his materials so complete, that though he proposes only to be an annotator, he often sounds like a seer.

It is clear, besides, that he means his book to stand or fall on his interpretation of the sonnet sequence beginning "Altarwise by owl-light." These sonnets, which Thomas himself described in his usual gnomic way as "the writings of a boily boy in love with shapes and shadows on his pillow," are here examined as the turning-point in his poetic progress, and their obscurities explained by reference to a series of astrological positions, which the poet learned about from popular works on the occult lore of the heavens and perhaps also from playing with a star-map or celestial globe. Let me say at once that I regard this account of Thomas's sources, and the explanations of the allusions in the sonnets, as indisputable—and a nice piece of literary detection to boot. But to recognize and acclaim this accomplishment is not to accept all the implications of the interpretation. The assumption that these sonnets hold the key to Thomas's poetic development is open to argument; though it is true that in his later work he was moving towards a more dramatic and less violently introspective and abstruse presentation, yet his universe was all of a piece, though he saw it at different times in different ways. Here one may quote more seriously the poet's comment: "Thirty-seven years with the same head." Besides, the ultimate difficulty that he presents to the reader is not to be entirely solved by Professor Olson's kind of explication. It is a difficulty of reference, certainly, but chiefly of substance; the trouble is not so much to find what is *in* any poem, but to discover what the poem *is*. These elaborate paraphrases of the sonnets in terms of a celestial cycle provide only a limited illumination, precisely because the critic has not, in my view, adequately prevented his paradigm of symbols from turning into a postulate about the form of the sonnets which is more dubious than a casual reader may realize. The whole explication is based on the assumption that the sequence is "a meditation on a problem of great seriousness by a character in serious suffering because of that problem," that the poems "seek and find a decision." The tail is wagging the dog; the sequence must be a medi-

tation because that is what it turns out to be through the exigencies of paraphrase. The poems, for the purpose of the annotation, are a heraldry of thought.

Now while it is true that many poems are just that, e.g. Donne's *Anniversaries* or *The Dunciad*, the most that can be done with these sonnets in that way is what Professor Olson does: he translates them into an idiom of his own, and does not so much interpret them as erect a scaffolding from some of their sources, nailed together with what bits of orthodox syntax he has been able to find in Thomas's lines. I have mentioned already the severeity of his self-imposed limitations in this book. I wish that his readers could be sure that they are altogether self-imposed, that they do not perhaps exist partly as a result of his whole idea of criticism, that in attacking with such skill the "devices" and "conventions" of a poem he does not tend to miss its essence, or, to put the matter in terms he would approve, that he does not risk a confusion between the material cause of the poems and their final cause.

This sounds like cavilling, but I submit that no disinterested reader can turn back to the "Altarwise by owl-light" sonnets after studying chapter 6 of this book without a conviction that the poems are both more and less than the critic makes them out to be. Less, primarily because they do constitute a grotesque cryptogram, obviously composed, in part at least, to bamboozle everybody. More, because one can apprehend the sonnets as a series of oracular riddles, all of which have the same answer, Adam, i.e. man fallen and restored. Thomas's obsessive (and traditional, not "private" as Professor Olson has it) preoccupation with the microcosm, in which man is the image of all natural and supernatural possibility, is the "final cause" of these poems, and the imagery is often astrological just because it is anthropomorphic. This does not mean that Professor Olson is "wrong"; only that he is perhaps not right enough.

More is involved here than the "meaning" of a few poems by a writer as yet imperfectly assimilated by his generation. The neo-Aristotelian insistence upon the poem as "whole" or "object," excellent corrective though it may be to the extravagancies and irrelevancies of biographers and semanticists, still arbitrarily and dogmatically fences off the poem from the rest of experience, and attributes to the poem itself, *and to the criticism of it*, a false autonomy. A poem is indeed an artefact, but it is also an action, an event, and may be interpreted by analogy (which is contrapuntal history) as well as by the identification and articulation of its parts.

REALMS OF VALUE*

DOUGLAS P. DRYER

Professor Perry's *Realms of Value* is devised to remedy a serious shortcoming in contemporary thought. In all ages men have some opinions about the social order in which they live and some views as to what ways of living are better than others. Moral and political philosophy has tried of old to replace such opinions by something better. It has sought a more adequate understanding of the state, the economic order, of law, morals, rights, and institutions generally. It has especially tried to furnish a sounder basis for evaluating institutions and policies. In recent generations several specialized social sciences have emerged. They have attempted to take over the first of these tasks from traditional political philosophy and improve upon it as modern natural sciences have improved on what previously passed for natural philosophy. All the social sciences have achieved more reliable bodies of information. Some of them, especially economics, have greatly improved the concepts and laws for understanding their domains. Yet the social sciences have two serious shortcomings in contrast to traditional moral and political philosophy. They fail to provide an integrated understanding of the different aspects of human living to which each confines itself; and they provide no basis for distinguishing what institutions are justified from those which are not, or for ascertaining what laws or policies are better than others. Utilitarianism has offered the chief remedy for the latter deficiency. Most recent attempts to remedy the former have been derived from Hegel. Perry uses a common principle to deal with both.

The social sciences have generally shared the widespread conviction that since values are a matter of what men happen to like or want there can be no objective basis for value judgments of any sort. Perry argues that this conviction is correct in its premise but mistaken in the conclusion it draws. Anything has a value by being an object of interest. Instead of undermining value judgments, Perry holds that this principle discloses where their basis lies. Whenever an interest is shown in fact to be taken in anything, an objective basis is provided for a value judgment. Different kinds of interests account for different kinds of values. This thesis, adumbrated by his teacher, William James, Perry developed in *General Theory of Value*, published in 1926. This work constitutes the most elaborate attack on the problem of values which has been made in the present century. *Realms of*

**Realms of Value: A Critique of Human Civilization.* By RALPH BARTON PERRY. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press [Toronto: S. J. Reginald Saunders and Company Limited]. 1954. Pp. xiv, 497. $9.75.

Value is a sequel to it. Here, in a way reminiscent of Hegel, Perry sheds light on the various domains of human living, such as art, law, religion, by means of the diverse interests they serve. By showing how different sorts of interests are related to each other, Perry is enabled to cope with the vexing questions lying on the borderland between the specialized social sciences and to develop an integrated understanding of their several domains. Like Hegel, he argues that morality, law, economic and political life are distinctive in making for an adjustment of interests. Hegel, however, anticipated the social sciences in maintaining that institutions can be understood but not evaluated: "the history of the world is the court of judgment on the world." In opposition to this view, and like the utilitarians, Perry is also concerned to develop a basis for evaluating arrangements of living. He maintains that the utilitarians were correct in defining value in terms of interest, but he rejects their hedonistic calculus because it ignores the irreducible diversity of interests. The arrangements in any domain of human living may be appraised in terms of their efficiency in promoting the distinctive interests of that domain. But an arrangement of human living must ultimately be evaluated by how well it makes for a harmonious fulfilment of all interests.

Some will feel that Perry has failed to substantiate his central thesis. Yet everyone will find in him inviting discussions of law, education, history, morality, science, art, religion, government, and economic life. Each of these chapters may be read and reread with pleasure.

SHORTER NOTICES

The Origin and Goal of History. By KARL JASPERS. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd. [Toronto: British Book Service (Canada) Ltd.]. 1953. Pp. xvi, 294. $5.25.

The declared aim of Professor Jaspers' book is modest by comparison with many works classified as philosophy of history. It seeks to discover no laws of the historical process; it makes no claim to display the course of history as, in some sense, necessary. Its task is simply the elaboration of a single pattern or schema which will bring together in one intelligible whole what we know about the history of the world, and thereby "help us to understand ourselves and our situation." The pattern is to be suggested empirically; rational insight and revelation are disallowed. What Jaspers proposes to do at the level of universal

history is exactly what the ordinary historian does when he writes about "The Renaissance" or "The Evolution of Parliament." Philosophy of history is to differ from history only in scope.

The schema is set out (with a diagram) in Part I ("World History"). It rests on an initial value judgment which the author believes his readers will allow: that the period 800–200 B.C. was "overwhelmingly fruitful in fashioning humanity." Almost simultaneously, in three independent "centres of spiritual radiation" (China, India, and the West), "man as we know him today came into being." Before this axial period there flourished ancient civilizations in which "man had not yet really come to himself." Reaching back beyond this is "the dark world of prehistory lasting for thousands of years," from which man was released by a Promethean revolution in the arts and crafts. Since the axial period there has been only one development important enough to be noted at this level of interpretation: the rise of modern science and its technological application. Our age of technology is analogous to the original Promethean leap from prehistory into history, and it shows signs of leading to a new political achievement: the unity of the world, which is already "a single unit of communications."

Jaspers' schema is superficial. And he makes only the most perfunctory attempt to justify it empirically. In Part II ("Present and Future"), which comprises more than half the book, Jaspers moves rapidly from a consideration of what has been to what ought to be. Having descried world unity ahead (as "goal" rather than as "fact"), he plunges into a long discussion of the way it may safely be attained, in the course of which we are warned against socialism and imperialism, and chided for our lack of faith—although the author admits that "what the faith of the future is or or should be cannot be imagined." Exactly how we came to lose faith Jaspers does not know, but he directs our suspicions toward the Enlightenment, the French Revolution, and German Idealism. And he reminds us of the "immutable evil" of man's nature. In Part III ("The Meaning of History") he goes on to discuss not what history means, but what a view of history can mean to us, e.g. it can be "a factor in our volitions" and "set limits to our potentialities."

In view of the expectations it encourages, Jaspers' book is a disappointment. It fails to indicate, and then deal with, a manageable problem. It raises questions, toys with them, and then drops them as unanswerable. It indulges in idle speculation. And in addition to being dogmatic, it is dull.

WILLIAM DRAY

No Graven Images: The Contemporary Relevance of the Ten Commandments. By CHARLES W. LESLIE. Toronto: The Ryerson Press. 1954. Pp. xxii, 88. $1.50.

In this series of sermons delivered during the Lenten season of 1952 Professor Leslie re-examines the meaning and purpose of law for the Christian. He is concerned at the tendency of many Christians to confuse respectability with goodness, conformity to the social code with true morality. Social laws are temporary standards, negative in meaning; a rigid adherence to them is a mark of Pharisaism. The Christian must get beyond them to what is of permanent value through the experience and practice of love.

The fear of Pharisaism and an overemphasis on Grace have, on occasions, been made the ground for antinomianism. Professor Leslie is aware of this danger and admits the need for some social laws. "Freedom can be dangerous." The test of adequate social standards is found in the traditional view of Humanism in such laws as promote the social conditions necessary for the adequate development of personality. But the Christian while submissive to law must rise above law to his main responsibility to God. On this basis Professor Leslie makes many penetrating analyses of the Christian's duties. Unfortunately the inspirational needs of the Lenten audiences give rise to exaggerated and impractical solutions to pressing contemporary problems.

In the section on social justice we are told that "as Christians we must be concerned that *every one of God's creatures*, every one of our fellowmen, has *equal* access to a *just* share of the material bounties which God the Creator has provided" (italics mine). This sounds very inspirational as an expression of love but it makes no sense and could not possibly be applied. It might be interpreted as a satisfactory principle for an ideal society but Professor Leslie is not relegating Christian ethics to some millenial episode. There is a similar tendency to inspirational exaggeration on other topics which make this book both challenging and chastising to Christians but of doubtful value to practical politicians.

This criticism will not discomfort Professor Leslie since he considers Christian ethics a standing challenge to all human codes. The Christian, in his view, emphasizes the divine redemptive purpose in history and seeks for the eternally true principles in the evolving revelation of God's law. And the key to all is love.

Professor Leslie, as a scholar, is aware that the Ten Commandments, from which he takes his start, are a product of a particular

culture and, as such, have no necessary application beyond that culture. But he does not accept the implied relativism. He views these, and other laws, as a temporary expression of divine purpose embodying eternal truths. The task of the Christian is to distinguish the permanent from the temporal.

This view permits rather drastic reinterpretations of the Commandments (for instance, the commandment on adultery) to free them from the limitations of the culture in which they were first expressed.

Professor Leslie makes no claim to originality in this little book. Instead he tries to bring the results of scholarship to bear on the problems of biblical morality for a popular audience. His main purpose is to inspire and to challenge Christians to a higher morality than mere legalism or conformity to contemporary middle-class respectability.

MARCUS LONG

Freedom: A New Analysis. By MAURICE CRANSTON. London and Toronto: Longmans, Green and Co. 1953. Pp. viii, 177. $2.50.

In this little volume, Mr. Cranston undertakes to point a new way of expressing the problem of freewill and to offer some notes.

In the first section, making extended use of linguistic analysis he rejects the efforts of philosophers to define freedom positively as a faculty or power, as government by self or by reason, and as government by another will which could "force one to be free." He accepts the negative definition of freedom as absence of constraints, and notes that it therefore changes as the nature of the constraints change.

In the second section he describes and interprets the variation in meaning of freedom, and hence of liberalism, in England, France, Germany, and America. In England, where the constraint feared was government encroachment, the meaning of liberalism is that of Lockean minimal government or laissez-faire. In France *libéralisme* is influenced also by the demand for freedom from economic constraints and hence refers also to the left wing demand for self-government by the masses. In Germany, since the constraints to be escaped seemed to call for strong government, liberalism embraces *étatism*, and even compulsory freedom. The laudatory, emotional aspect of its meaning is fairly constant except, as in America, where this is affected by its association with leftist and totalitarian interpretations.

It is in the third section that Mr. Cranston goes firmly to work on his new approach.

The real problem of freewill, he argues, is not whether one could have acted differently if one had chosen differently, but *whether one could have chosen differently*. Those, from Hobbes to Ryle, who have rejected the problem as bogus, have missed this point, as have those who have "solved" it by showing that freedom is self-determination. What the determinist opponent here requires is only "that everything which happens in the universe, including the actions and decisions of human beings, is in principle predictable" and this challenge is neither eliminated nor met by showing that the will is not a thing, or that scientific law is not of the coercive kind, or that freedom is self-determination. What the libertarian needs is to show that at least some events, preferably some choices, are not in principle predictable. The problem is thus formulated, he notes, without naming either freedom or will.

This is the new way of expressing the problem, and to it Mr. Cranston adds that some predictions cannot be made—or at least not announced—without themselves affecting the result; that some predictions, notably of inventions, cannot be made since they would include what they are supposed to *pre*-dict; and, perhaps most persuasively, that in so far as a prediction requires *all* the evidence, this would lead right into the event to be predicted, leaving no interval for the prediction.

Here he rests his case, claiming only to have shown some ground of doubt of determinism and hence of belief in libertarianism—"but with a residual uncertainty."

The book is intended for the general reader as well as for the professional, and its clear and lively expression and provocative argument will make it well worth while to both kinds of reader. I think, however, that the predictability which he attacks has no signification unless the grounds from which the prediction is asserted possible, are specified. Since he fails to insist on this, his blows, though doughty, seem to this reader to land on an ill-defined ghost and to help the libertarian not at all.

W. J. McCurdy

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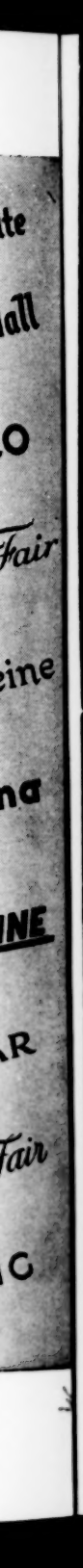
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